

Claudia Schiffer to help launch first-ever Palestinian

TEL AVIV (AP) — Supermodel Claudia Schiffer will be the first to launch the first-ever in the Palestinian territory. Some 150 other celebrities will also be in attendance. Schiffer helped launch the Oasis Resort, a one-holiday complex on the West Bank, Jericho. The \$100-million complex, run by an Austrian, is aimed at attracting tourists from where gambling is prohibited. Palestinians will be allowed to gamble.

British child character takes U.S. by storm

LONDON (AP) — British child actor who drives a car, wears a hat, and has a war generation, the United States. Noddy, a character by one of Britain's most successful children's authors, is a cartoon character that has been a string of U.S. television shows. Noddy has been shown in a U.S. television show, which is a U.S. television show.

Demonstrator interrupts funeral service

SYDNEY (AP) — A demonstrator interrupted the funeral service for a man who was killed in a car crash. The demonstrator was shouting slogans and holding up a flag. The funeral service was held in a church.

Horoscopes and magic predictions don't do anything

CASTELGANDIA — Pope John Paul II said that horoscopes and magic predictions do not do anything. He was speaking at a press conference in Castelgandia.

Mr. Audi is no prince charming

BANGKOK (AP) — Nineteen-year-old golden Pongphakha, who was crowned Miss Universe, said that Mr. Audi is not a prince charming. She was speaking at a press conference in Bangkok.

Iran ends war games at Afghan border, troops stay

TEHRAN (R) — Iran announced the end of its 70,000-man military manoeuvres near Afghanistan on Monday, but said the troops who took part would stay in the eastern border area.

Bashir arrives in Rabat

RABAT (AP) — Sudan's president arrived Tuesday in this North African nation on a three-day official visit expected to include talks with the Moroccan monarch on the U.S. missile strike on a Sudanese pharmaceutical factory. General Omar Hassan Al Bashir, accompanied by three ministers, is also expected to use the visit to strengthen bilateral ties. Morocco has solid ties with the United States, and King Hassan II has proven himself a valued intermediary in the search for peace in the Middle East. Sudanese Foreign Minister Mustafa Osman Ismail was among the dignitaries accompanying the president. The Aug. 20 cruise missile strikes targeted a Sudanese factory which the United States claims made ingredients for chemical weapons and Islamic extremist training camps in Afghanistan.

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Political leaders praise discussions with the Regent as frank and candid

'The Prince was receptive, and we felt that there was an effort to engage us in a real and serious dialogue'

By Ghadeer Taher

AMMAN — Political leaders came away from Monday's meeting with HRH Crown Prince Hassan, describing their discussions with the Regent as frank and candid, particularly as they took up topics as sensitive as corruption and socio-economic ills.

In a five-hour meeting with 20 public figures, from the right and left of the political spectrum, the Regent and Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh listened to the invitees' assessments and views on a wide range of problems facing the country from its regional position and normalisation of ties with Israel to what they described as increasing corruption and the backtracking on democracy.

"We spoke to Prince Hassan in a candid manner without rhetoric and long-winded niceties," said a prominent politician. "The Prince was receptive, and we felt that there was an effort to engage us in a real and serious dialogue."

According to participants,

many spoke candidly about what they see as growing corruption in the public sector, including in the awarding of government contracts to local and foreign companies. They even broached the touchy issue of what they see as corruption in the judiciary — a long-time off-limits subject.

The newly-enacted Press and Publications Law, which has come under heavy criticism by human rights groups, politicians and journalists, was also laid out on the table. Participants said such a law was a regression in public freedoms.

The political leaders said they were concerned about the worsening economic situation and the growing poverty and unemployment in the country.

Participants, who included seven former premiers, deputies, senators, writers and known opposition figures as well as two women — Naela Rashdan and Janet Mufti — said the depth and frankness of the discussions was a clear sign that the Crown Prince was

interested in widening the base of consensus in the Kingdom.

Prince Hassan, who recently met with members of Parliament, the Muslim Brotherhood's executive bureau, secretaries general of political parties, professional unions and the judiciary, has been stressing the need for engaging in a national dialogue that would enable all sectors of society to shoulder their responsibilities.

"The different types of figures invited indicates that there is a keen interest to have a political dialogue with a serious purpose," said one politician. "No one was excluded because of his political line or because he is considered 'with' or 'against,'" said one official.

Contrary to established tradition, former Prime Ministers Ahmad Obeidat and Taher Masri were excluded from the 13th Senate. But they along with other figures perceived not to always be supportive of the government policies were included on the Palace's guest list.

Participants told the Jordan Times that the Crown Prince was receptive to their views and analyses of what they perceive as the challenges facing the country, both domestically and regionally with the corruption issue topping the agenda.

"We did not have one-way traffic at this meeting," said an official. "Everyone was candid and not always diplomatic in expressing their views."

"If we made such statements to a Jordanian governor or interior minister, we would have found ourselves in jail," said another official, commenting on the openness of the discussion.

Several participants said the meeting should help Tarawneh, who is preparing to present his government statement to Parliament for a confidence vote, to understand the views and concerns of the various political trends in the society. Politicians expect that some of the ideas presented at the meeting will be incorporated into the government's plan of action.

"One of the purposes of

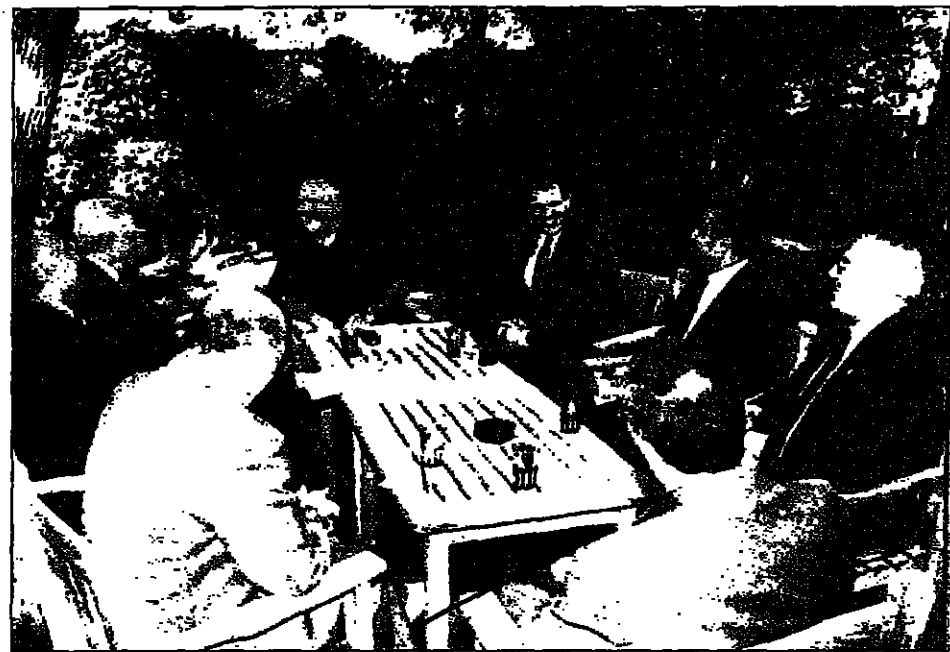
the gathering is to put the premier in the picture," said another invitee. "He is a relative newcomer to the domestic scene."

Tarawneh, who headed the Jordanian team to the peace talks with Israel, later became Jordan's envoy to Washington and then foreign minister in former Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali's government. He was appointed chief of the Royal Court in February 1997 — a position he held until assuming his new post.

Tarawneh told the participants that he was committed to fighting corruption and nepotism and ensuring transparency — issues spelled out in His Majesty King Hussein's letter of designation to the government.

"He was modest and at the same time eloquent in his reply," said a former prime minister.

"Tarawneh's government should be given the time and support to carry out reform policies and not be pressured into implementing feel-good policies to please the street."



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on Tuesday receives at the Royal Court Palestinian official Mahmoud Abbas in the presence of Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh, Royal Court Chief Jawad Anani and senior officials (Photo by Boghos)

Prince Hassan, Abbas review efforts to revive Mideast peace

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Executive Committee Secretary General Mahmoud Abbas on Tuesday discussed Arab and American efforts to overcome the obstacles facing the Middle East peace process.

During a meeting at the Royal Court, attended by Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh, Royal Court Chief Jawad Anani, Foreign Minister Abdul Ilah Khatib and Director General of the General Intelligence Department Lieutenant General Samih Banih, Prince Hassan and Abbas discussed the outcome of all efforts made by the parties concerned to implement the U.S. proposals that call for a 13 per cent redeployment of Israeli forces from the West Bank.

Prince Hassan said Jordan will continue to exert its utmost efforts and will support the Palestinian people to establish their independent state on their national soil. The Crown Prince said Jordan will make every possible effort to push the peace talks forward to achieve a comprehensive and lasting peace, whereby the rights of all parties concerned will be guaranteed.

Abbas called on Jordan to pursue its efforts to overcome the current obstacles facing the peace process and to ensure the implementation by Israel of the U.S. proposals.

He thanked Jordan for its continuous support for the Palestinian people towards restoring their legitimate rights.

Commenting on the meeting between the Crown Prince and Abbas, Information Minister Nasser Judeh

told the Jordan Times: "This is an affirmation of Jordan's active and pro-active role in bridging the gaps between the Palestinians and Israel and the use of our relations to ease tension in the region."

"It's in Jordan's national interest that the current impasse is ended and that (signed-upon) agreements are implemented," Judeh said.

During the meeting, which came on the eve of the visit by the U.S. envoy Dennis Ross to the region, the two sides agreed to convene the Joint Jordanian-Palestinian Committee soon.

The meeting was attended by Palestinian Ambassador to Jordan Omar Khatib and Director of Jordan's Representative Office in Gaza Ziad Majali.

Quteishat urges private sector to invest in JD3.5b water projects

By Ahmad Khatib

AMMAN — The government on Tuesday urged the private sector to invest in water projects worth JD3.5 billion (\$5 billion) over the next 14 years in order to meet rising demand for this scarce natural resource.

Ministry of Water and Irrigation Secretary General Qusai Quteishat told the first Jordanian Businessperson's Conference that the private sector has played an important but traditional role in developing the water sector.

"I believe this traditional role has to be changed," he said. "It has to be expanded with a little bit of creativity which is an asset the private sector can offer."

Quteishat reviewed the ministry's investment programme which includes technical assistance projects worth JD71 million, water projects worth JD1.916 billion, wastewater treatment projects worth JD926 million and other water projects worth JD534 million stipulated by the Jordanian-Israeli

peace treaty.

"These projects will ensure that the chronic water problem will not worsen," he stated.

Water Ministry's statistics show that by the year 2020, water supplies will double to 1,250 million cubic metres per year, while water needs will double to 1,658mcm, resulting in a 408mcm deficit.

According to Quteishat, Amman had exploited all water sources around the capital in 1977. It was thus forced to extract water from the Azraq Oasis in Jordan's eastern desert and from the Jordan Valley, he said.

He added that the government is now looking into increasing the amount of water obtained from the Jordan Valley as well as tapping into the ancient waters of the Disi aquifer.

Stressing the importance of cooperation between the government and the private sector in funding water projects, Quteishat said: "Both the government and the private sector cannot achieve these projects

unless they cooperate creatively in funding them."

The secretary general described three projects the government listed as potential private sector endeavours: managing Amman's water supply system, wastewater treatment projects for the Amman-Zarqa basin under build-operate-and-transfer (BOT) arrangements, and pumping Disi water to Amman under the same BOT plan.

Among other projects the private sector could participate in, Quteishat mentioned equipment maintenance, designing, constructing and supervising projects and managing wastewater projects.

"I believe there are no obstacles preventing the private sector from participating in such plans, especially that some legal points have been adjusted to facilitate such projects," he said.

Recent reports said Iran was interested in funding the Disi-Amman water project on BOT basis.

Yilmaz calls on Israel to accept U.S. initiative

RAMALLAH (AFP) — Standing alongside Palestinian President Yasser Arafat, Turkish Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz called on Israel Tuesday to accept U.S. proposals for rescuing the peace process.

Yilmaz, whose government has drawn the ire of Arab states by pursuing close military cooperation with Israel, said the U.S. proposals centred on further Israeli withdrawals from the West Bank were the best way to move towards a comprehensive Mideast peace.

"We expect and hope that in order to put the peace process back on track and to achieve its goals the Israeli side will accept the American initiative as the Palestinians have," Yilmaz said during a joint press conference with Arafat.

Yilmaz, who met Monday with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, said that despite Turkey's warning ties with Israel, his government remains a "supporter of the Palestinian cause."

"Turkey supports the peace process because it is a golden

opportunity to achieve common goals in the region, for a comprehensive and just peace," he said.

Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations have been deadlocked for months due to Netanyahu's rejection of the U.S. proposal, which would require Israel to place an additional 13 per cent of the West Bank under Arafat's control in exchange for tougher Palestinian action against armed militants.

Israel initially refused the U.S. plan on the grounds that a 13 per cent withdrawal from the West Bank would jeopardise its security.

But in recent weeks Netanyahu has offered a variant of the 13 per cent pullback and special U.S. envoy Dennis Ross is due in the region Wednesday to see if he can broker a deal.

Arafat gave no hint that success was in reach, saying the negotiations remained "stalled" because the Israeli government has refused until now to accept the American initiative.

'No Jordanian lawyers involved in sale of Jerusalem lands to Jews'

By Tareq Ayyoub

AMMAN — Palestinian Ambassador to Jordan Omar Khatib Tuesday denied local press reports that some Jordanian lawyers were involved in the sale of Palestinian lands to Jews in occupied Jerusalem.

Responding to reports that Faisal Hussein, who is in charge of Jerusalem file in the Palestinian National Authority, presented Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh with a list of names of Jordanian lawyers who were allegedly involved in land sales in Jerusalem, Khatib said "Hussein has met with Tarawneh and discussed with him several issues including Jerusalem. But no list was

given to Mr. Tarawneh."

"We have succeeded in unweaving attempts by some Israeli firms who were attempting to deceive some Palestinians and Jordanians into selling their properties in Jerusalem," he told the Jordan Times.

The ambassador said: "But in coordination with the Jordanian side, we have succeeded in unearthing these attempts by some firms which pretended to be foreign but in fact were Israeli."

Khatib did not reveal the names of these firms and when the Israeli attempts were discovered but noted that a Jordanian-Palestinian committee will convene in Amman next week, headed by Tarawneh and top Pales-

tinian negotiator Mahmoud Abbas, to discuss coordination in trade, agriculture and Jerusalem issues.

"We do not accuse anybody, but we say that there are Israelis seeking to manipulate and deceive some Jordanians who own lands in Jerusalem. They [Jordanians] should beware of these attempts," he added.

"Some naive Palestinians and Jordanians, who have no knowledge of what is happening in Jerusalem, fell prey to these firms," he said.

"Luckily, until this moment, no case was recorded of land sale to Israelis by Jordanians. All the attempts were discovered," Khatib said, without elaborating any further.

Association vows to battle press law

By Tareq Ayyoub

AMMAN — Professional union leaders on Tuesday criticised Parliament for its endorsement last month of the Press and Publications Law, with one going as far as calling for early parliamentary elections.

At a joint press conference, three union leaders spoke against the law, which they described as a setback to the democratisation process and called for amending it.

Jordan Press Association (JPA) President Seif Sharif said journalists will continue their struggle to change the law through all possible channels, not ruling out the

option of resorting to the Higher Court of Justice to contest its constitutionality.

"We should not be unjust to the deputies, but they bear the responsibility for approving this law," he told the 90-minute press conference, attended also by Chairman of the Professional Unions Council Hassan Jaber and Jordan Bar Association (JBA) President Hussein Mjalli.

Sharif said Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh and Information Minister Nasser Judeh promised to be "objective" in implementing the law which they said they "inherited from the previous government."

"This law violates the

Constitution, the National Charter and international norms," Sharif told reporters.

The Lower House of Parliament last month endorsed the controversial law by a majority of 38 lawmakers from 48 present at the 80-seat chamber.

The Upper House endorsed the law without any amendments.

Several international human rights groups have denounced the law and urged His Majesty King Hussein, HRH Crown Prince Hassan, former Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali and Parliament not to endorse the law.

Jaber, on his part, said the

new law will "negatively" affect press freedoms in the country.

"The Lower House bears a historical responsibility for passing this law," said the Chairman of the Professional Unions Council.

"We call for reconsideration of the law because it will have a negative impact on the Jordanian society as a whole and we were surprised that it was drafted without consultations with the concerned parties," Jaber added.

JBA President Mjalli was harsher in his criticism of the Lower House and called for early parliamentary elections, saying this will bring a new "legislative authority

that represents the people with all its institutions and opinions."

"The people fell prey to the executive authority. The (press) law is nothing but a tool to suppress citizens," Mjalli said.

"The government should have worked as the guardian of press freedoms as stipulated in the Article 15 of the Constitution," he added.

The law "will make us yearn for the old days under the martial law," Mjalli, a former deputy, told the press.

On Monday Lower House Deputy Nazih Ammarin said opposition members were considering a petition for the review of the law.

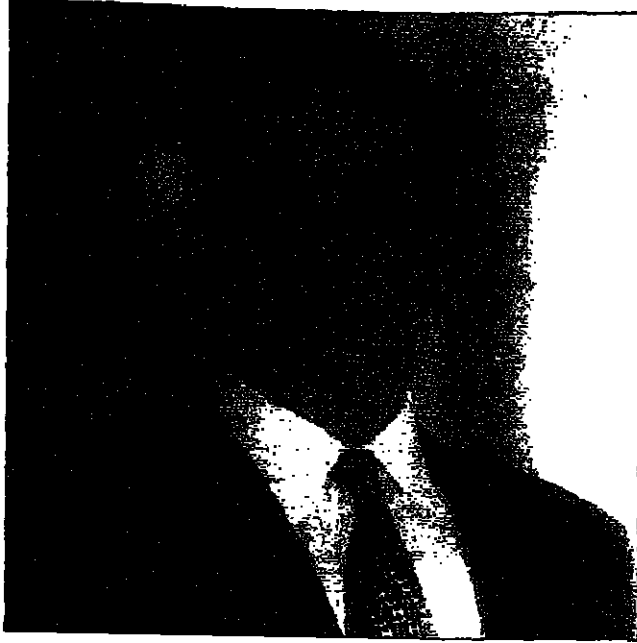
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Prince Ali leaves for Russia on horseback trek

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Prince Ali Ben Hussein today leads a group of Jordanians of Circassian origin on a horseback trek through Syria and Turkey to Russia to attend a peace festival.

Prince Ali's visit comes in response to an invitation from the president of Adygei to attend the festival, in which Circassians from the various Caucasus republics will take part.

The visit by the Jordanian group aims to advance understanding among nations as well as encourage cultural contacts between those who left their homeland under compelling circumstances and their areas of origin.



Health Ministry postpones increases in treatment fees

By Soha Ma'ayeh

AMMAN — Health Minister Nafel Ajlouni Tuesday said the decision to raise medical treatment fees at the country's 22 state-run hospitals has been postponed to allow the ministry to study proposed health insurance plans and a fee scale.

Over the last four months the Health Ministry conducted studies on raising the treatment fees, as most medical charges were based on a 1950s agreement, according to health officials.

The ministry was expected to raise fees from 30 to 50 per cent based on the minimum fees of the Royal Medical Services (RMS), the Jordan University Hospital and private-sector hospitals.

"Most charges do not cover 15 to 18 per cent of the actual costs of treatment, and the ministry is trying to decrease

the loss caused by treating those who can afford to pay," Ajlouni told the Jordan Times in an interview.

Meanwhile, former Health Minister Ashraf Kurdi last week said the ministry's budget, estimated at JD110 million, is limited.

Speaking in an interview with the Jordan Times, Kurdi stressed that the budget cannot accommodate the increasing demands in light of the rising treatment costs and the growing population.

"The increase will be for those who can afford to pay, and poor people will not be affected by the increase because they are already exempt from the cost of treatment," Kurdi added.

He pointed out that the ministry spends JD83 million for the treatment of Jordanian citizens, with JD38 million going towards treating those who can afford to pay.

He said the ministry collects only JD7 million from civilian patients and JD1.1 million from military personnel for treatment, while the ministry spends JD20 million annually on their actual treatment.

In addition to treating patients, Kurdi said the ministry conducts 250,000 tests per year on foodstuffs, and monitors food establishments and food preparation facilities for compliance with health codes.

Concerning the role of the Kingdom's health care system, Ajlouni said a comprehensive evaluation was needed to bring treatment and services up to standards.

Although medical practice standards are good, "not all Jordanians benefit equally from good health care because the providers' roles are not distributed equally in light of current economic conditions," Ajlouni said.

Regent urges Islamic charitable groups to develop disaster relief efforts

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on Tuesday urged Islamic voluntary and charitable organisations to upgrade their efforts in dealing with the consequences of natural disasters and to train personnel to assist the needy in accordance with the principles of Islam.

Addressing the closing session of a four-day workshop organised by the Hashemite Charity Organisation at the Centre for Disaster Management, Prince Hassan said the centre should put into practice His Majesty King Hussein's directives to serve the nation and stand by Islamic societies in times of suffering and adversity.

Prince Hassan, who is chairman of the board of trustees of the Hashemite Charity Organisation, said the organisation has fulfilled a great humanitarian role that strengthened Jordan's relations with nations and peoples around the world.

Through its humanitarian activities and interaction with sister organisations in Arab and Islamic countries, the Prince said, the Hashemite

Charity Organisation is embodying the principles of Islam because it is helping the needy and the poor.

"It is the duty of all of us as Muslims under difficult circumstances to extend a helping hand to other Muslim people," said the Crown Prince.

Calling for closer cooperation and coordination among Muslim charitable organisations, Prince Hassan pointed out that the young Muslims can play a very important role in charity work.

Prince Hassan reiterated his earlier call for the establishment of an international zakat (alms) fund, a proposal he submitted to a conference of Awqaf ministers and last year's summit of the Organisation of Islamic Conference in Tehran.

He expressed hope that such a fund would be created soon to offer assistance to the needy and to the victims of natural and man-made disasters.

The Regent said coordination and cooperation among all organisations dealing with voluntary work and disaster management is a positive phenomenon which should be



HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Tuesday awards a certificate of merit to Hashemite Charity Organisation supporter at the conclusion of a four-day workshop (Photo by Boghos)

strengthened and fostered.

The Regent presented awards to several intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations that provided support to the organisation and enabled it to carry out its activities in different Arab and Muslim countries.

The Crown Prince presented trophies to the United Nations Development Programme, the National Centre for Human Resources Development, Jordan National Red Crescent Society and the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees.

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Prosecutor refers case of alleged arsonists to court

By Rana Hussein

AMMAN — The state prosecutor last week referred to court the case of 11 people who were allegedly involved in arson incidents and explosions in different parts of Amman last spring, according to judicial sources.

"The State Security Court is currently examining the case and is expected to announce a date to begin the trial sometime in mid-September," the source said.

Three of the 11 suspects are at large and officials say they are believed to be in the United States, England and the United Arab Emirates.

The State Court issued a public notice on Sept. 4 in local newspapers giving the men a 10-day period in which to surrender or otherwise be tried in absentia. "But so far, none have turned themselves in," the source told the Jordan Times Tuesday.

In May, the government announced the arrest of eight of the 11 suspects, known by their group name "Reform and Challenge," who allegedly were involved in the attacks, and said these individuals "were receiving

orders and financing from abroad."

The government then described the attacks, which resulted in no deaths or injuries, as "aiming at destabilising the country and undermining its stability in retaliation for its national stand."

"The group was trying to leave a social and political impact on security without harming anybody," said then acting Information Ministry Nasser Lawzi at a press conference in May.

The minister said investigations revealed that the individuals had "assembled to form a fundamentalist group to strike against public places, security centres and security figures, especially intelligence officers."

In April, the suspects allegedly set fire to vehicles belonging to Mohammad Rasoul Kilani, former intelligence chief, and Senator Jawdat Sbouh, a former interior minister.

Attackers also firebombed the Modern American School in Amman, a traffic police compound and the parking lot of the Jerusalem Hotel, damaging several vehicles.

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Popular conference calls for resistance to 'Judaisation' of Jerusalem

By Tareq Ayyoub

AMMAN — The General Secretariat for the Popular Conference for Jerusalem on Tuesday urged the Arab and Muslim worlds to resist attempts to Judaize Jerusalem and to reinstate the economic boycott against Israel.

At a press conference held at Al Mustaqbal party headquarters, former Islamic Action Front leader Ishaq Farhan urged Arab states that have concluded peace agreements with Israel to stop all forms of normalisation with the Jewish state.

Farhan was speaking following a two-day meeting of the conference secretariat, which was attended by representatives of 18 Muslim states to devise a plan to preserve the Arab and Muslim identity of Jerusalem.

He urged Arab states to stop all forms of normalisation with Israel and to revive the boycott, which was eased following the signing of Egypt's and Jordan's peace agreements with Israel.

"To resist the normalisation of ties with Israel... is a strategic goal and an urgent national task to fortify our nations from [Israeli] penetration," Farhan said.

"All peace agreements that were signed with Israel... are rejected and not compulsory to the Arab and Muslim nations, and we urge Arab regimes to cancel them," he added. "The resistance of the enemy [Israel] is a right and legitimate jihad [holy war]," Farhan said.

He said the secretariat denounced what he called the Israel-Turkey military "alliance" and considers it a danger that threatens Syria, Iraq and Iran in particular and the Arab and Muslim nations in general.

Farhan, who was reading a written statement, called upon the Palestinian National Authority to put an end to its negotiations with Israel and to "resist the occupation by all possible means."

The Popular Conference for Jerusalem was established last year to mobilise Muslim efforts to "liberate" the Holy City from Israeli occupation.

Its first meeting was held in Jordan last year with hundreds of representatives attending from several Arab and Muslim states.

Farhan said the next conference will be held in August 1999 in Pakistan.

He added that the popular conference will host a similar event in a state neighbouring Palestine.

Labour ministry launches new vocational training project

By Mohammad Ben Hussein

AMMAN — The government has launched a \$6 million project to offer on-the-job vocational training as part of nationwide efforts to combat soaring unemployment, an official said Tuesday.

The scheme, begun this week, is expected to secure jobs for 7,000 unemployed Jordanians over the next three years, said Nadim Marian, director of the Vocational Training Programme at the Ministry of Labour.

Under the new vocational training scheme, job seekers will be trained by private sector companies, including woodworking shops, blacksmiths and bakeries, for up to six months while the ministry pays for the training expenses.

In turn, the trainer will offer the trainee a nominal salary to help him/her meet basic needs.

His Majesty King Hussein designated government of Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh to focus on combating social ills such as poverty — nearly one-third of Jordan's 4.2 million people are estimated to live below the poverty line — and unemployment, officially estimated at 15 per cent and independently at 27 per cent. He said the public and private sector had to cooperate to absorb more unemployed.

"The purpose of the project is to help the unemployed in a short period of time," Marian added.

Under the scheme's regulations, enterprises which agree to train the jobless can employ them at the end of the training period if they match "their professional expectation."

Trainees would also replace non-Jordanian workers holding the same jobs as part of efforts to gradually cut down on the at least 350,000 foreign labourers working in the Kingdom, many illegally in mental and low-paid jobs.

"If the trainee is a woman who agrees to work in a non-traditional area, then this will also help break the culture of shame related to jobs," said Marian.

Society does not look favourably at women working in fields outside education, medicine, office work and other service sectors.

The Ministry of Labour placed an advertisement in local newspapers on Monday asking potential candidates to join the programme. "The response so far has been promising. We received many inquiries," Marian told the Jordan Times.

Meanwhile, a long-awaited national conference on unemployment is set to open later this month to try and coordinate public and private-sector efforts to combat joblessness.

Noting that the issue of unemployment was too big to be solved by one project which can help only 7,000 people, Marian said the scheme was only a pilot project that could be expanded or replaced by larger projects in the future if "it proves to be successful in recruiting the expected number of people."

The government is funding the programme together with the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme as part of efforts to boost social productivity in Jordan by improving vocational training.

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Government reiterates position on alliances



FIRST WOMAN UAE PILOT: Aisha Mohammad Hamily, 17, from the United Arab Emirates, poses for a picture near a Jordanian airplane Tuesday in Amman. Aisha graduated from the Royal Aviation Academy to become the UAE's first female pilot (AFP photo)

By Aifa A. Toukan

AMMAN — The government on Tuesday refrained from direct comment on whether Jordan's intelligence chief was in Israel earlier this week for talks on forming a strategic alliance between Amman, Ankara, and Tel Aviv.

"We do not usually comment on the movement of our security officials," Information Minister Nasser Judeh told the Jordan Times, when asked to respond to Tuesday's edition of Israel's daily Ma'ariv which said Samih Batilhi held talks Sunday with senior Israeli intelligence and military officials on the prospect of forging the three-way alliance.

"I'm reiterating our firm position as expressed by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan during the visit of the Turkish prime minister [Mesut Yilmaz] to Amman on Sunday, which rejects the concept of alliances and pacts," Judeh stressed.

"Our approach to security in the region is comprehensive. Inclusive of all, and exclusive of none."

Jordan has bilateral security arrangements with both Turkey and Israel, and plans to beef up military cooperation with Ankara next year. Tel Aviv and Ankara, which enjoy close military ties, have signed several defence pacts.

Speculation of the formation of a three-way alliance has been repeatedly rejected by Jordan.

Arab countries and Iran have expressed apprehension of the Turkish-Israeli relationship. Jordan, as well, has come under heavy criticism for its ties with Ankara and Tel Aviv.

Syria, in particular, has stepped up its campaign against the Turkish visit to Jordan, Israel, and the Palestinian self-rule areas, which ended yesterday.

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Arab countries and Iran have expressed apprehension of the Turkish-Israeli relationship. Jordan, as well, has come under heavy criticism for its ties with Ankara and Tel Aviv.

Syria, in particular, has stepped up its campaign against the Turkish visit to Jordan, Israel, and the Palestinian self-rule areas, which ended yesterday.

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Ministry denies reported AIDS figures

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Health Ministry Tuesday denied a report in the local press that 26 non-Jordanians with AIDS have been deported and that 191 Jordanians have contracted the disease.

Ali Assad, head of the ministry's disease control department, told the Jordan Times that since the first recorded AIDS case in 1986, the total number of registered AIDS patients has reached 189,

including 77 non-Jordanians who are no longer in the country.

He added that the ministry has recorded five new cases of AIDS this year among non-Jordanians and 10 among Jordanians.

The press report said that a total of 191 AIDS cases among Jordanians have been reported and that the Health Ministry this year has registered 183 AIDS patients, of whom 45

have died.

The report also quoted World Health Organisation estimates that there are at least 600 AIDS patients in Jordan at present.

Sa'd Kharrabsheh, head of the National Committee for AIDS Prevention and Control, said in an interview with the Jordan Times earlier this year that the Health Ministry has been conducting awareness campaigns among students to help them avoid contracting AIDS.

Writers' group appeals to prime minister over deportation case

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordan Writers Association has appealed to Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh to intervene on behalf of Adnan Jaber, an association member who has been ordered by the security services to leave Jordan, and help him retain his Jordanian citizenship.

A spokesperson for the association told the Jordan Times that no word had been received from the prime minister's office as of Tuesday, when Jaber was supposed to have left the country, but he expressed hope that the government would re-examine the case and allow him to remain in the country.

Association member Abdul Jabbar Abu Gharbieh told the Jordan Times that Jaber, who used to hold a Jordanian passport, was deported from the West Bank by Israel in 1976 after serving a prison sentence under Israeli occupation rule.

Abu Gharbieh said Jaber, a Jordanian of Palestinian origin, had hoped that he could remain in Jordan because he held the Jordanian passport before Amman's decision to sever its administrative and legal ties with the West Bank.

He added that when Jaber's passport expired, it was given only one one-

year extension. Jaber appealed to the Higher Court of Justice for full citizenship and a five-year passport, but according to Abu Gharbieh, he lost the case.

In its message of appeal to the prime minister, the association noted that Jaber had tried to renew his one-year passport when it expired. It argued that since Jaber was in Jordan before ties were severed with the West Bank in 1987, he is entitled to Jordanian citizenship or at least a temporary five-year passport like West Bank residents to allow him to reside in Jordan, move freely in the country and travel abroad.

Farhan, who was reading a written statement, called upon the Palestinian National Authority to put an end to its negotiations with Israel and to "resist the occupation by all possible means."

The Popular Conference for Jerusalem was established last year to mobilise Muslim efforts to "liberate" the Holy City from Israeli occupation.

Its first meeting was held in Jordan last year with hundreds of representatives attending from several Arab and Muslim states.

Farhan said the next conference will be held in August 1999 in Pakistan.

He added that the popular conference will host a similar event in a state neighbouring Palestine.

September 9, 1998

Hizbollah sees Iran as model for Islamist government

LONDON (AFP) — The leader of the Shiite Hizbollah militia, which leads the fight to push Israel out of Lebanon, said on Tuesday that he saw the Iranian government as a model of Islamist administration.

Speaking in an interview with the Financial Times, Hizbollah's leader Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah said Iran represents an example and a model.

He continued: "There are a lot of models. Some of them are very dangerous like the Taliban."

Nasrallah said it seemed a United States-style Islam as ignorance, savagery, the degradation of women, a regression to feudal warfare, and to teach is not as propaganda for rough groups to which they give arms."

In reformist President Khatami's Iran, by contrast, the militia told the Financial Times, "what is being presented is an enlightened and tolerant Islam, based on the origins of our religion."

"This model will have a radical and positive impact on the Arab World, affecting its people, and through them, its governments," Nasrallah said.

He also said he saw Nasrallah's "revival entry into government."

"It's a question of timing and whether we can get the elements of our programme considered."

"We want a government of institutions, with ministers who make decisions on the basis of a corporate — a reference to the businessman-like approach of Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Al Hariri to rebuilding Beirut — the Middle East's financial centre."

He added he wanted a professional and honest civil service regardless of religion.

Nasrallah also predicted that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu would not soon order the withdrawal of troops from southern Lebanon, as some have predicted.

"Netanyahu is an opportunist, but he will not be able to defend a peace he hands out even if it is a peace of arms, but a certain group Hizbollah."

"They would be signified as losers, which would only encourage the Palestinians to redouble their efforts against the occupation of their land by Israel."

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DR Congo ceasefire reached without rebels

VICTORIA FALLS (AFP) — Six African heads of state Tuesday agreed to a ceasefire in the DR Congo, the head of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) announced, but rebels fighting the Kinshasa government said they would not be bound by it.

"We called for the immediate cessation of the hostilities in the DRC," Secretary General Salim Ahmed Salim said.

The ceasefire was agreed by DRC President Laurent Kabila, his allies from Angola, Zimbabwe and Namibia, and the presidents of Uganda and Rwanda, which Kinshasa accuses of invading the DRC on the side of Tutsi-led rebels, who mounted an uprising on Aug. 2.

However, the rebels, who had a delegation present in Victoria Falls which was excluded from the talks, left the venue saying they would not be bound by the ceasefire.

"We are not bound by this agreement because the only Congolese in the meeting was [President Laurent] Kabila, the one who is killing his own people," rebel leader Bizima Karaha declared on his depart-

ture from the Elephant Hills hotel, venue of the talks.

"We accept the principle of having a ceasefire, but because we have been excluded, we are not bound by it," said Karaha, who was formerly Kabila's foreign minister.

He added: "They only know we exist when we start shooting."

Rwandan Foreign Minister Anastase Gasana and his Namibian counterpart Theobald Gurirab told AFP that a ceasefire would come into force Tuesday at 6:00 p.m. (1600 GMT).

Salim said the heads of state had ordered their defence ministers to meet at OAU headquarters in Addis Ababa Thursday to discuss "modalities of the ceasefire and the withdrawal of foreign troops."

In Cape Town, South African President Nelson Mandela welcomed the agreed ceasefire as "a tribute to the high quality of leadership" in Africa.

Mandela told reporters he was "very happy about the results of the negotiations."

"This is a tribute to the high quality of leadership which

Africa has produced, and we are very happy about it," he said.

The summit, originally due to last just through Monday, spilled over into a second day of talks Tuesday.

An Angolan source said the talks were prolonged because of Kigali's insistence that it had no troops inside the DRC. Rwanda is the only country to deny direct involvement, although it has warned it would intervene if Kabila massacred ethnic Tutsis.

"Rwanda refuses absolutely to recognise the presence of its troops in the DRC," the source said.

Uganda has admitted having deployed troops inside the vast central African country and expressed anger Monday when Angolan aircraft bombed the rebel-held eastern DRC town of Kalemie despite a temporary de facto end to hostilities.

Kinshasa has insisted no deal can be struck until Rwandan and Ugandan "invaders" withdraw, but justified the presence of its own allies — Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia — as supporting his government against overthrow by force.

Milosevic stands ground in Kosovo, but hints at political compromise

BELGRADE (AP) — Rebuffing the latest Western demands to halt the fighting in Kosovo, Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic insists he has no intention of calling off his troops battling ethnic Albanian rebels.

But in a sign he is willing to make a political compromise over the status of the troubled Serbian province, Milosevic reportedly wants to hold elections for a Kosovo parliament that would be dominated by rival ethnic Albanians.

The reliable independent daily Glas Javosti said Tuesday that Milosevic has ordered the Serbian government to start drafting election plans.

The daily quoted Kosovo Albanian sources as saying parliamentary elections should be held within three months and that the formation of a new Kosovo parliament should represent the basis of an agreement between Milosevic and ethnic Albanian leaders.

The rebel who is fighting Serb troops have indicated they do not support an agreement in principle reached last week between Milosevic and ethnic Albanian political leader Ibrahim Rugova under which Kosovo would eventually be granted self-rule. Western diplomats say that deal could

take months to finalise.

Milosevic abolished Kosovo's ethnic Albanian-dominated parliament when he stripped the province of autonomy in 1989.

Since then, ethnic Albanians, who outnumber Serbs roughly 90-1 in Kosovo, have held two underground elections for their parliament, which the Serb authorities branded illegal.

After talks Monday with U.S. officials in Belgrade, Milosevic issued a statement declaring he had stressed that "terrorism in Kosovo will be suppressed and eliminated."

He called anew for international condemnation of the Kosovo Liberation Army, which Yugoslav and Serb forces have tried to crush during a six-month assault in the secessionist province.

The visiting officials, Assistant U.S. Secretary of State John Shattuck and former U.S. Sen. Bob Dole, urged an end to the Serb offensive in Kosovo, where hundreds of people have died and an estimated 265,000 have been driven from their homes. The two demanded a pullback of government forces so refugees could return to their homes.

In an apparent effort to avoid some of the international criticism, Milosevic's security forces have released most of the

approximately 500 men taken captive in the latest offensive against the KLA.

Some of those released told reporters they had been beaten with sticks and complained they were kept in forests without food and water for 24 hours. Other local residents said 50 people were still missing and 17 were killed in the offensive.

"They came and took us in the mountains," said Xhavit Rudi, a 30-year-old farmer who was detained near the village of Ponorac. "They said they would cut us if we ate or drank or went to the bathroom."

Hundreds of refugees who fled police detention or were released returned to villages surrounding Ponorac to find many of their houses and belongings burnt.

Western officials estimate that 50,000 people are now living in hills and forests and at risk of starvation or freezing in winter.

United Nations agencies appealed Tuesday for \$54 million to help the refugees.

"Adequate funding is critical to avert further tragedy in the freezing hills where tens of thousands of displaced people are huddling," U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees Sadako Ogata said in Geneva.

"We have to act very quickly since time is running out."



DOWN AND OUT IN MOSCOW: A Russian man Tuesday looks at a currency rate poster outside an exchange office in central Moscow. The political and economic crisis that has gripped Russia since mid-August has seen the rouble sharply devalue and prices soar (Reuters photo)

Yeltsin hesitates over candidate

MOSCOW (AP) — President Boris Yeltsin huddled with top aides at his country residence Tuesday, discussing whether to stick with his first choice for prime minister or present a compromise candidate to the hostile parliament.

Yeltsin has said that Viktor Chernomyrdin is his only choice to lead a new government that must deal with the country's worst economic crisis since the Soviet breakup in 1991.

But parliament's lower house, the State Duma, overwhelmingly rejected Chernomyrdin for a second time Monday. Yeltsin was weighing whether to choose him again for the all-important third and final round of voting, which is expected in about a week.

As of Tuesday afternoon, Yeltsin had still not named anyone, fuelling speculation that he might pick a compromise candidate.

Yeltsin conferred with senior aides at his country residence, Gorky 9, outside Moscow.

Several legislators said that Chernomyrdin had met with Yeltsin, but Yeltsin's office later issued a statement saying

the two men had not yet met.

"Today the countdown has begun for the position of compromise... with another candidate," Konstantin Titov, a member of parliament's upper house, told the ITAR-TASS news agency.

However, ultranationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy said Yeltsin planned to stick with Chernomyrdin, who held the premier's post for five years before he was sacked by Yeltsin in March.

"It will be Chernomyrdin and no one else," Zhirinovskiy said.

Communist leader Gennady Zyuganov said that the renomination of Chernomyrdin would lead to the "complete paralysis of the entire political process."

"The whole nation today is in opposition to Mr. Yeltsin," Zyuganov added.

The first two votes in parliament demonstrated lawmakers' strong opposition to Yeltsin and have delayed the formation of a new government during a time of turmoil.

If the Duma rejects Yeltsin's candidate again, then the constitution calls on the president to dismiss parliament and call

new elections within three months. Yeltsin would rule by decree, along with an interim government, until the new legislature is seated.

"The economic crisis is gaining momentum with catastrophic speed," Chernomyrdin warned lawmakers Monday before they torpedoed his nomination. "We are all standing on the edge and no time is left for setting scores."

Legislators might be willing to change their votes in the third round in order to preserve their own jobs. The dissolution of the legislature would only add to the country's political and economic turbulence, and it's not clear how angry Russians would vote in new elections. Many incumbents could lose their seats.

Chernomyrdin's efforts to win parliamentary confirmation have left him little time to devote to the economic crisis.

The Communists and their allies say they have nine alternate candidates, including Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov. The liberal Yabloko party has suggested acting Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov.

Real IRA declares complete cease-fire

DUBLIN (AP) — Irish Republican Army dissidents responsible for Northern Ireland's worst-ever terrorist atrocity called a "complete" cease-fire Tuesday but didn't apologise for their actions.

The splinter group, dubbed the Real IRA by journalists and unwilling to accept the IRA's July 1997 cease-fire, committed the Aug. 15 car bombing that killed 28 civilians and wounded more than 330 in the Northern Ireland town of Omagh. A 29th victim died of his wounds and was buried Monday.

On Aug. 19, the group declared a "suspension" of what it called its "military operations," in a step short of Tuesday's formal cease-fire.

In Tuesday's statement issued to state broadcasters RTE, the dissidents — calling themselves by the IRA's traditional Gaelic sister label, Oglagh na hEireann, or "Soldiers of Ireland," said: "As a result of intense consultation that has taken place over recent weeks... the volunteers of Oglagh na hEireann have determined a complete cessation of all military activity."

Ulster Unionist leader David Trimble, who heads the new Northern Ireland Assembly, welcomed the ceasefire announcement but said it did not diminish the tragedy of the Omagh bombing.

"I am glad that these people have come to their senses and realised the futility of their actions. That doesn't change the enormity of what they have done and their culpability for it," he said.

Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern also gave a qualified

welcome to the statement.

"On the basis that this statement is now put fully into effect and is final, it would represent both an important and a positive development," Ahern said. "It will not, unfortunately, bring the dead of Omagh back to life, heal the injured or comfort their families."

Ireland's President Mary McAleese said Tuesday she was heartened by the announcement.

"I simply hope that those who were slain in Omagh will be the last to be added to the grim roll call of victims of violence," McAleese told an ecumenical service at the National Irish Memorial in Sydney, Australia. She is on an 11-day diplomatic visit to Australia which ends Wednesday.

The British government's Northern Ireland Office issued its own statement emphasising that "the Real IRA needs not just to talk but to convince the Irish people that their violence is at an end for good."

The Real IRA's announcement came hours after Northern Ireland's major Protestant party, the Ulster Unionist party, ended its ban on direct communication with the IRA-aligned Sinn Féin party, another symbolic step down the road to reconciliation.

At a two-hour meeting Monday at Stormont Parliamentary Building in Belfast, the venue for a new cross-community government outlined in April's peace accord, Trimble discussed the establishment of a multi-party administration with seven other party leaders, including Sinn Féin chief Gerry Adams.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Swissair 111 flight data missing

HALIFAX (APF) — Investigators are hoping the cockpit voice recorder of Swissair Flight 111 will provide clues on the final minutes of the jet's fatal plunge into the ocean that are missing from the flight data recorder. The transponder attached to the voice recorder has been located, but Canadian Navy officials said divers will probably have to wait until Wednesday because of poor weather before going down again in their search for it. Investigators are hoping that the voice recorder, when retrieved, will tell them what happened in those final six minutes of the flight when there was no contact with air traffic controllers, either on radar or by radio, and when the data recorder was blank. While the flight data recorder found Monday is in "good condition" and could still be critical to determine the cause of last week's tragic accident that killed 229 people, it stopped working after the plane descended below 3,000 metres, lead investigator Vic Gerden of the Transportation Safety Board said. He explained the data recorder — also known as the "black box" — relied on electric current and electric failure was possibly the reason it stopped recording.

Killers of S. Africa's Ruth First seek amnesty

PRETORIA (R) — Apartheid-era security agents Tuesday sought amnesty for blowing up activists fighting the white minority regime beyond South Africa's borders in the 1980s, including prominent academic and author Ruth First. Spymaster Craig Williamson and former Security Branch Commander Johan Coetzee are among eight policemen also seeking amnesty for the 1982 bombing of the London offices of the now-ruling African National Congress (ANC). "The attack on the ANC London offices was to protect South Africa and its Western capitalist orientated allies against a violent takeover by Communist orientated and Communist-led organisations," Coetzee said in a written submission to the amnesty committee of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Coetzee said the bomb was also intended to demonstrate to Britain that there were risks attached to continuing to allow the ANC to operate from the country. Nobody was killed in the London bomb, but it caused extensive damage to property.

Trial set to begin for Whitewater figure

SANTA MONICA (AP) — Five years after the case was filed, Whitewater figure Susan McDougal is set to stand trial for allegedly embezzling \$150,000 from conductor Zubin Mehta and his wife. McDougal's attorney sought to postpone the trial, scheduled to begin Tuesday, but Superior Court Judge Leslie Light ruled last week that the defence had been given enough time to prepare and already had thousands of documents to submit to the jury. In addition to embezzlement, McDougal, 43, is charged with tax fraud in connection with her employment as bookkeeper and personal assistant to Zubin and Nancy Mehta from 1989 to 1992. The case is unrelated to the investigation by Whitewater prosecutor Kenneth Starr that has involved McDougal, a former business partner of President Bill Clinton and first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton. The judge has ruled there will be no mention of Starr during the embezzlement trial. Jurors were told to disregard anything they may have heard about the Whitewater probe.

Explosions in Macau street injure 14

MACAU (AP) — Bombs blamed on gangsters exploded Tuesday in the violence-rocked Portuguese enclave of Macau, wounding four senior police officers and 10 journalists, authorities said. The bomb blasts were the worst in recent years, and were the first to involve journalists, indicating gang members may want to punish reporters covering their criminal activities. Witnesses said a police officer's car exploded first. When police and journalists gathered at the scene, a home-made bomb apparently hidden in a motorcycle parked nearby exploded and injured the crowd at around 2 a.m. TV footage showed bloodied journalists and police screaming for help and running for cover in a small alley, fearing another explosion. Police said the second bomb was believed to have been set off by remote control.



French and Belgian trucks Tuesday block the Lille-Ghent autoroute early September 8 at the French/Belgian border crossing at Reckem. The French trucks, among the most militant in Europe, are protesting working and pay conditions (Reuters photo)

French truckers set pace in global dispute

PARIS (R) — French truckers led a global day of protest against long working hours in the haulage industry Tuesday, setting up partial road blocks at key border crossings around the country.

The International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), which organised the day of action, expects demonstrations throughout Europe and Latin America with rallies also planned in India, West Africa and the United States.

The ITF says it wants to raise awareness of poor working conditions in the business rather than paralyse world traffic.

But whereas truckers in most countries called for simple leaflet-distribution campaigns, France's militant drivers have decided to set up road blocks and by mid-

day (1000 GMT) around 100 barricades were in place at various frontier posts.

Travellers reported long delays at northern French channel ports and at the Franco-Spanish border towns of Irun, La Jonquera and Biriou, where Spanish drivers joined forces with their French counterparts to block heavy goods traffic.

"The delays are expected to last two or three hours," said Manuel Garica Taguas, spokesman for the transport branch of Spain's general workers union (UGT).

German drivers joined up with French unions, using their lorries to snarl traffic at three frontier posts, while problems were also encountered at Luxembourg, Italian, Swiss, and Belgian crossings into France.

"The situation appears to be deteriorat-

ing," said a spokesman for Britain's Road Transport Federation. "[The French ports of] Cherbourg and Caen are totally blocked and drivers at Le Havre are experiencing two-hour delays," he added.

The British Freight Transport Association predicted the day of action might cost British industry one million pounds (\$1.7 million) and throw European delivery schedules into chaos.

Car drivers were being allowed through most of the French blockades, but the traffic flows were being filtered, which was causing substantial bottlenecks.

"It's a question of security. Last year 2,800 trucks died on the roads. This is unacceptable," said Christian Laflaquiere of the CFTD Transport union in southwestern France.

Zimbabwe seeks foreign cash for land redistribution

HARARE (APF) — Zimbabwe's plan to give millions of hectares of white-owned land to blacks faces a critical test Wednesday as foreign donors meet to decide whether to back the programme with cash.

Zimbabwe has invited about 60 donor nations and organisations to a three-day conference where it will solicit pledges of aid towards the cost of the land reforms, which it estimates at 40 billion Zimbabwe dollars (\$1.6 billion).

Official sources said at the weekend that of the potential donors — who are being tapped for the bulk of the money — 25 had so far accepted the invitation.

These include major players such as the former colonial power, Britain, other European countries including France, the European Union, the United States and the World Bank.

Most of the potential donors agree that there is a need for land reform in Zimbabwe, where some 4,000 white farmers own 30 per cent of the country while millions of blacks live in overcrowded communal areas.

But many have expressed reservations over the plan as it stands, while Zimbabwe's current costly military interven-

tion in the Democratic Republic of Congo in support of embattled President Laurent Kabila has raised diplomatic eyebrows over the plea for cash.

Britain says it is prepared to contribute to the cost of reforms under certain strict conditions, stressing particularly that the programme should benefit the poor and must not be open to corruption.

Land reform has been a central plank of President Robert Mugabe's policies since he came to power at independence in 1980, but early attempts were plagued by failure and scandal.

Many early resettlement schemes — on land bought from white farmers willing to sell — collapsed because they lacked the infrastructure, finance and training to become viable.

Independent newspapers then exposed the fact that some land acquired for the resettlement of peasants had instead gone to government ministers and other officials.

Faced with the fact that these problems made donors reluctant to cough up further funds, the government called the donors' conference in the hope of winning support for its latest efforts.

World
Japan v
sanction

AFRICA —
The United Nations Security Council has
voted to impose sanctions on South Africa
for its apartheid policies. The vote was
14-0, with the United States and the Soviet
Union leading the effort. The sanctions
include a ban on arms exports and a
ban on new investment in South Africa.
The United States has also announced
that it will suspend all new military
sales to South Africa. The sanctions are
intended to pressure the South African
government to end apartheid and to
allow for free and fair elections.

Malaysian
moral A

KLUMPUR (APF) —
The Malaysian government has
announced that it will
investigate the death of a
journalist who was killed
while covering the
elections in the state of
Selangor. The government
has also announced that it
will provide compensation
to the family of the
journalist. The government
has also announced that it
will take steps to ensure
that the media is able to
cover the elections freely
and without interference.

More Mya
The Myanmar government has
announced that it will
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Bhamo. The government
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From the will to the goal

IN A rapidly changing world and a volatile Middle East region, countries like Jordan, with little natural resources, must work twice as hard as their neighbours to identify, analyse and devise plans to face the challenges of the coming decades. For Jordan, such hard work should not only be concentrated on fending off external dangers but also consolidating its internal front and unleashing the potential of its educated and enlightened citizens, so that they can improve their well-being and contribute to the building of a prosperous and peaceful region.

To achieve that noble goal, HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, has launched a national debate by discussing with political and community leaders the different views of what constitute impediments to the Kingdom's political, economic and security progress and ways to deal with them.

While the process launched by the Regent is still to widen and spread engulfing all the population and its civil and tribal society institutions, particularly the media, whatever has been leaked so far from the Crown Prince's and government's encounter with political activists indicates that we are not only in the process of identifying our problems but are well into analysing their causes and proposing solutions to them. Indeed, the problems we face are complex and multi-faceted, but the goodwill, on the part of the leadership and the people is evident.

With the vision and the dream of a better Jordan in place, what it takes to tackle the challenges is a great deal of courage and less fear. There exists a genuine desire at all levels to reform our political, economic and social systems in a way that would not impair the social or political balances in the Kingdom. What is needed also is a wider and broader consensus on the issues foremost on people's minds: peace, regional relations, badly-needed reform of the economy, and the public sector, and a strengthening of the role of the judiciary.

All along that road, we should avoid the rhetoric and slogans of long past eras. Today's world is not about grand designs modelled on grand old achievements. It is about peoples and states adequately and thriftily managing their affairs, especially their human resources for optimum returns. The competition is tough, and only the healthiest — the free, the enlightened and the educated — will win.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Rai's Raja Elissa discussed the recent development in the peace process and the American efforts to push forward the 14 months deadlocked peace process. The writer doubted the ability of the United States to achieve any progress, if American President Bill Clinton remains surrounded by Jewish consultants. In order for Clinton to break the current stalemate between the Palestinian National Authority and Israel, he has to free himself from the Jewish tentacles around him. In the four months since the American envoy, Dennis Ross, came to the region last, the world has witnessed many developments and complications which have placed further obstacles in the path of peace. First, there was the Clinton fiasco when he admitted to 'improper' relations with the White House intern, Monica Lewinsky. Then came the twin bombings of the American embassies in Nairobi and Dar Es Salaam followed by American retaliation in Sudan and Afghanistan. Finally, there was Clinton's failed visit to Russia. After all these incidents, Clinton remembers that there is a peace process, but still Albright, Ross, and Lewinsky are all Jewish, said Elissa.

Al Rai's Nabil Sharif called on deputies to share with the government the responsibility for curbing expenditure. The Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh gave instructions to his ministers to reduce travels abroad, which, according to the writer, is a very encouraging step. Paradoxically, deputies, in big numbers, are travelling everywhere, said the writer. The numbers of deputies travelling to conferences or missions do not correlate with the importance of some of those events, said Sharif. The writer lashed out at some deputies for not being committed to their own slogans, calling for cuts in spending, while they themselves go on meaningless missions. Sharif charged that the importance of reducing travelling, and saving in general, is to provide examples for the Jordanian people to follow.

Washington Watch

Violence is not the response to injustice

Dr. James Zogby

THE U.S. RESPONSE to the attacks on its embassies in Kenya and Tanzania was morally, politically and legally wrong. The U.S. cruise missile strikes on Sudan and Afghanistan have further enflamed segments of Arab and Muslim public opinion, only serving to exacerbate tensions, putting U.S. allies and interests in the Middle East at greater risk. I've said all this already. But having said this in no way lessens my clear condemnation of those who carried out the U.S. embassy bombings, those who ordered these attacks, organised and funded them and those who also continue to issue threats of more attacks in the name of religion or the Arab cause.

The groups who make these pronouncements and carry out these actions are not, and must not be allowed to present themselves as, the authentic carriers of the aspirations and true character of the Arab and Muslim peoples. Rather they are a small band of ideologues blinded by hatred and anger who have usurped the legitimate concerns of Arabs and Muslims and have attempted to exploit them in order to promote their own fanatic agendas.

The damage they have done in the process of carrying out their attacks and making their pronouncements is incalculable.

In the first place they have taken the lives of too many innocents on too many occasions. Their victims are mostly hapless men, women and children who were in the wrong place at the wrong time. There is no cause and no rhetoric that can be used to justify their crimes. Their claim to moral authority is infuriating, as is their use of religion to justify their actions.

What is the difference between their crimes and the crimes of those whom they decry? Are the cold-blooded murderers in Luxor more noble than the savage attacker in the Al Ibrahim mosque? Or were the bombings of the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania more high minded than the terror bombing in Qana? In all these instances and so many more, the actions by all sides were immoral and brutal and the victims were innocents.

Those fanatic groups about whom I am speaking have done more than just commit murder; they have also done grave damage to the causes they claim to espouse and to religion itself. Just look at the fallout from one such incident — the bombing of the World Trade Center in New York City.

In the aftermath of that tragic event I remember praying that its perpetrators were not Arabs or Muslims, because I feared what would happen to my community if they were.

The bombers and plotters were caught, convicted and are now

serving well-deserved prison sentences — but we, innocent Arab Americans and American Muslims are still feeling the impact of their hideous crime against not only our fellow citizens, but against our image and our standing in society.

The World Trade Center bombing was the first terrorist act ever committed by any Arab or Muslim groups in the United States, yet its repercussions are still felt every single day. Our enemies, who have for years sought to target Arab American and American Muslims as supporters of terrorism, latched onto that bombing and have used it and some subsequent outrageous acts of terror to justify their defamation of our communities. While FBI and U.S. State Department annual reports clearly establish that anti-U.S. violence originating from Arab or Muslim groups only accounts for a very small fraction of all such attacks both world-wide and domestically, the propaganda mills of our detractors have painted a very different picture. But more than just defaming us, our enemies have used the fear created by the World Trade Center bombing to push their negative stereotypes of Arabs and Muslims into legislation and public policies that threaten the civil liberties of our communities in the United States.

While we continue to condemn those purveyors of hatred against Arabs and Muslims who use each terrorist attack (whether or not they are committed by an Arab or Muslim) as another occasion to attack us, should we not also condemn the fanatic bands who have, by their terrorist actions and threats of terror, helped to fuel this dangerous anti-Arab and anti-Muslim campaign? They are, with their words and actions, not only harming or threatening to harm "the West", they are also doing real damage to religion and to the image, causes and aspirations of the Arab and Muslim peoples.

While Arab American and American Muslim organisations have spoken out against them, I believe that the time has come for all Arabs and Muslims to declare zero tolerance for the actions and rhetoric of these groups who have done so much harm. There can be no excuses for their actions and no apologies offered for their statements. They are not the spokespeople for Arab and Muslim causes. It is not they who will secure justice for those who suffer from injustice. By their actions, these groups have only brought on repression, hatred, fear and more injustice.

As Arabs or Muslims, we can not absolve ourselves of the need to speak out against these shadowy and cowardly murderers. They claim to act in our name, but they have distorted our image and

hurt our good name. They claim to act on behalf of our causes, but they have done harm to all that we aspire to achieve. They must be politically isolated and condemned.

Having said that, let me make clear that I do not support the tactics that are too often used against these groups or against entire societies as a result of the actions of these groups. Intolerant repression, violations of rights and the condemnable retaliatory strikes that target the innocent as well as those suspected of wrong doing are not the way to deal with extremists and fanatics.

In fact, those responses have all too often played into the hands of extremist groups, creating more injustice, more alienation and more adherents and supporters on whom they can prey. What must replace this tit-for-tat, evil-for-evil, cycle of violence is a call to a higher standard.

It is imperative that America be challenged to end its double standard and translate its stated commitment to "democracy, freedom and rule of law" into a real working programme that meets the needs of the Arabs and Muslims. Arab governments must assume some responsibility here. It is, in part, their surrender to the double standard that allows the injustices to continue. Passivity in the face of oppression creates the feelings of powerlessness and rage that are the breeding grounds of terror. Visionary Arab leadership that promotes an Arab political and economic agenda challenging the West's double standard will give hope and direction to the legitimate yearnings of the Arab people, thereby reducing the appeal of extremist ideologies.

At the same time, Arab Americans and American Muslims must respond politically as well. It is not enough to complain. Our community must organise our resources and mobilise politically to fight for a change in U.S. foreign policy. To a great extent, the "double standard" that exists is a function of the imbalance that exists in U.S. domestic politics. We will not see a just and balanced U.S. foreign policy, until we create more balance in U.S. politics, and that will require hard work and commitment from Arab Americans and American Muslims.

Injustice can not be tolerated and we must demand and work for an end to policies that support the denial of basic rights to our people. But at the same time, with all this having been said, we can no longer turn a blind eye to those who resort to threats and terror in response to injustice. It is imperative that we speak out in a clear and consistent voice against them. They make our path toward justice all the more difficult by their evil deeds and words.

LETTERS

Solutions for the 'jewel in the crown'

To the editor:

AS I walk the surrounding hills, beaches and sands of beloved Aqaba I more and more appreciate how lucky I am to be living here, at this present time, with its history being newly uncovered and its potential future in the balance right now.

Surely it must be realised there is the need of an overall strategy which would ensure the development of the city, yet provide all the amenities of a Jordanian Red Sea holiday resort on its only coastal stretch. Plans are already afoot in the south, but here to the north there is nothing more than a hotchpotch of massive hotel construction taking place which will only benefit external investors instead of meeting the needs of the indigenous Jordanians. In this part of Jordan it should not be all that difficult to find an "acceptable balance between development and conservation."

In my daily walk to the North Beach I follow a quiet dual-carriageway passing the Riding Club and Palace grounds. I visualise a huge Green Park being eventually surrounded by the expanding city but only accessible to vehicles by this one road. Besides the lagoon one could relax in a cool cove, preferably with fresh-water recycling through fountains, encouraging fish and fowl. This park would encourage walkers to freely enjoy the natural surroundings but yet be easily accessible to a free beach and the sea.

A fast-link railway could connect Amman to Aqaba so that day-excursions are possible at a very cheap rate at the same time halving the travelling time, thereby making the trip feasible for the many Jordanians rather than the few. This in turn would give returns to commercial enterprises from which the only internal investment came. Facilities in the park would be free to Jordanians and healthy walking encouraged, not only in the park, but over the surrounding hills.

Archaeological discoveries can be protected by fencing them off and charging quite expensive entrance charges to those dedicated to the past, but by the use of Son-et-Lumiere techniques and searchlights, Jordan's history could be freely brought to light, as through the town and the Ayla site virtual experiences could be organised depicting the long past and including more modern interests such as the Great Arab Revolt, enacted on site.

The huge park would have many footpaths, some of wheel-chair width but no cycling or football pitches as these are amply provided in the town. The golf course would only need the greens to be grassed, for compact sand is suitable for the rest of the course, it also makes a good surface for tennis courts.

All these services and others would need to be strictly patrolled by Park Wardens to prevent damage to facilities as from the very start the message of conservation is "got access" to the populace showing they appreciate their royal heritage and what a jewel in the crown Aqaba is.

The whole would present to foreign tourists, in their hotels, an outstanding interest by day and evening, beyond anything else comparable to this part of the Red Sea.

Paul Saint
P.O. Box 1370
Aqaba



Do we really have a hope?

By Dr. Abderrazak Bani Hani

DURING THE past few years many analysts and writers have touched upon, or raised, the issue of Jordan's economic hardship, with some of them posing the dilemma in a rather awkward context. Until the present moment, none has proposed a practical avenue whereby the country can overcome its economic problem, or said anything on how and when the country can prosper. It seems that the issue of comprehensive development became an invincible difficulty that no one dares to look at from a holistic point of view.

To attempt any acceptable and operational solution to our economic problems, and to correct the "built-in" administrative flabbiness, one must comprehend the very nature of the Jordanian economy and society. However, to render this understanding possible, it is necessary to travel back to the origin of our evolution as a state. With this sort of understanding, it would be easy to discern the cumulative malfunctions and distortions that can be held accountable, at least partially, for the present situation. This is to say that our economic hardships don't stem from pure economic causes, but rather from a blend of factors, which include cultural, political, and anthropological agents. Economic causes should be the least to be taken into consideration. And in order to appreciate the meaning of this claim we must delve deeply into the historical process through which Jordan has reached the current stage of development.

At the outset we must recall, or at least try to imagine, the cultural makeup of Trans-Jordan when it was first ripped away from the Ottoman Empire in 1921 to create a political entity now

called the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The region was composed of scattered settlements that were culturally sporadic. Inhabitants in small towns and villages, with direct encouragement from the Ottomans, didn't develop an advanced state of economic interdependence, which was a prerequisite for the creation of a homogeneous society. In the desert, tribes invading each other was a common practice and, to a certain extent, an acceptable norm. Desert warriors' invasion of cities' outskirts was also a common practice. Dwellers of the desert thought of villagers as encroachers who were trespassing on their pastures. As a result, trade and interaction among the various parts of the country did not develop to make the necessary melting pot. Per contra, local feuding leaderships were thriving at the expense of a strong nation state.

When Prince Abdullah Ben Al Hussein led the Arab forces against the Turkish army, he noticed the prevailing fragile social structure and societal fragmentation, especially in the Trans-Jordan region. He pointed to this dilemma in his early days and pledged to do whatever necessary to surpass the perils posed by such a state of affairs. With his determination and astute leadership, the society was unified, and though the concept of a nation state, which was confusedly mixed with the concept of government, didn't exist in the collective mind of the people, the Prince continued to advance it in their daily affairs. He established the first system of public administration to organise the state and enable it to deliver necessary services to the public. Furthermore, the Prince introduced various changes into the newly created state to consolidate its power as a legitimate being that aims at enhancing people's standard of living.

Nevertheless, loyalty to the state, as a necessary condition for progress and development, remained a murky concept. The lack of genuine loyalty has created a large number of "free riders" whose only business is to exploit rather than sacrifice, and who take but never give. For this reason it is not a surprise that many of us just await the opportunity to strike on the state, because we are unable to differentiate between a state and a government. The shadow of this confusing environment is still encroaching on our public affairs. Evidence of this can easily be found by examining how some politicians and officials usually take the decisions to hire new personnel or promote existing staff. In some ministries and public departments over 60 per cent of the employees come from the same extended family, tribe, or hometown of the person who took the hiring decisions; an attitude evident of loyalty to the tribe or town rather than the state. This attitude has, overtime, reinforced the notion of "Regional Determinism" — look after you own even if the concerned employees or officials are not the best or the most knowledgeable.

To cite an outrageous example pertaining to this ridiculous situation, a Director General who was appointed recently replied to a person who congratulated him for his appointment: it is a bounty of God. With such an understanding of public posts, the decision making process will be based on a totally different nature. The decision-maker in this kind of environment will be acting as if the institution he manages is his own or part of his properties. He will feel that he has unbridled discretion over the destiny of the institution.

In 1961 the South Korean per capita income was in the order of \$80 only. At that time, the

country was teetering on the brink of total collapse as a result of the Korean War. However, in less than 15 years, per capita income jumped by more than 100 folds. The underlying secret of that success was the real commitment of the Korean private sector, coupled with government support. It is the underlying Confucian philosophy — calling on people to do whatever possible even to the extent of selling their properties, in order to educate their children and achieve success — that made South Korean entrepreneurs work days and nights in order to make South Korea a success story. The late President Park, who was assassinated after he realised most of his dreams, was in the habit of gathering exporters once a month to ask them about their problems and the bottlenecks they face, and used to give instantaneous orders to solve them. As a result of these meetings the Korean industries were able to increase exports by several hundred percentage points. The issue here is clearly of a cultural nature, which had nothing to do with economics. The whole country was goal oriented and everybody was morally obliged to tend to his duties consistently with the big goal of development.

Our only hope lies in our own sincere efforts and a determination that we deserve to grow, and that we have a message to deliver to humanity. We can shape our development the way we want, and cursing the West or envying the East is of use neither here nor there.

The writer is Secretary General of the Ministry of Planning. He contributed this article to the Jordan Times.

Rula Shukairy: Art at its most stimulating

By Hanz Peter

INCISIVE CONSTRUCTION is introduced in feelings, letters and paintings. Shukairy's paintings are personal letters to herself. I know nothing about Rula Shukairy personally, yet I can read into her art. In doing so, we are creating the world again. If we don't recreate what the artist has created, then that is grave embarrassment for the beholder. How you perceive her art depends very much on personal experience, on how you structure/define what the painter did. As read by us it is a structure in space — it is objective soft inner space.

Her paintings are non-representational, but still it can be read, and that depends on you, his, hers and my personal experience, demands, hates, lusts, wishes and feelings, and on how we structure it. Her art is spiritual — a landscape of the soul. Yet it is busy with representations for whatever reason. That is how she gives meaning to structure and reality. Man made work is often struck down as meaningless. But in Rula Shukairy's art, we discover/erect ourselves in talking about it, in reading through the reality of our life; our feelings which are inside her paintings.

These working forms are naturally directed by us as structure and space. This inner space of hers becomes in her painting a real space. A real space which is objective, soft or perhaps even one which is taken away from her whole personality. Still we may never get it! Yet you see what you see. You define it with your fantasy, with your ability to recreate it into structure, sounds of music and rhythm. Her paintings are characterised with the kind of openness in the surface of her paintings, in the space behind the different surfaces. As such, it makes people speak of their inner patterns, beliefs, demands, hates, lusts, obsessions... It is those inner patterns that cause images to be read differently. For we have always been trained that everything that influences gives us our own pattern, and it is so that we relate to the outside world. The frame and the glass and the matting the reality which we are part of make the work inside more important as it is an abstract from us. For after all, all good art is abstract, because art abstracts from reality, it crystallises facets and collects them into one line.

What the artist did is to give a perfect structure through a surface, which you define, following your ideas about it, about whatever, about

art, space, life etc.... Her wonderful structure and her killing of regularity lead to the destruction in her paintings. Through her art, it is easy to say that someone, somewhere is searching for the truth.

With china ink and acrylic, she uses the most raw materials anyone could use and create with such feeling. So, possibly, Shukairy chose very dangerous means that can turn into beautiful transparent surface colours, although acrylics are also known for great body and structure. The china ink she uses, gives more volume to the structure. Without doubt, her technique is the most advanced. In her art we found three levels: the shore, the blue sea, and the high sky. Seen from the back, it gives the beholder a chance to go in and identify. But at the same time, Shukairy achieves colour interference with no divisions. Her colours are never objective because life is never objective. With such strong means, she produces innovation to trap.

Narrowness and darkness are the secret of her art. It is thus evident that the artist relates opposite forces (narrowness and darkness) to each other (space and light) to get unity. That is when her inner visions/patterns comes out. For inner vision is the subject matter, even if it is not horizontal. And a real artist creates from inside. What use is there in copying?

The main message in her paintings as I see it, is that she gives us a chance to learn that we are dealing with the most important thing in life — light.

Very few painters are able to paint light. And Shukairy's paper takes light in itself and radiates it outside. The physical and emotional appearance of light transcends in radiation, into the outside. Yes, the material i.e. canvass, is there, but it is only there as a means for radiating the lights, after the light has sunk into it. Hence the most amazing thing of all: her collecting of light as a diamond does. The light is incorporated on surface, depth, structure, and emotional quality of colours, all of which contribute to meaning. This collection of light on such commonly used material, is most stimulating, but is nevertheless the most difficult task, and Shukairy has achieved this. This is her concentration of the outside world through her personal screen. For we understand the world through a screen of ourselves, and we understand ourselves through the screen of the world. Shukairy's inner visions are at first, stored for days, months, even years. Then it is painted and given to the world.

A great strength lies within her paintings: objectivity. Her paintings, as tempting as they may well be, are not a window into ambition, or even the real world. When we look at her art, we create it again; otherwise good

art is worthless. Her art keeps objectiveness of the surface as is, it does not pretend to open a window of reality, because such a window is dangerous in that it spoils the world, because the mystery would get lost. And because it is objective, we can relate to it — for it shows us the good with the bad. This is only made possible because she chose means, which can turn into nice beautiful surface colour, and transparency like a veil of silk.

I find Rula Shukairy's art very stimulating, myself being one who has been living in the art world for so long, yet her art does not remind me of anything I'd seen before. She has produced innovation, a new art. She has proven to us that art can only be art if it creates a new feeling.

The writer is an art critic and former curator at the Dusseldorf Museum, Germany.

Rula Shukairy joined the Princess Fakhrelnissa Zeid Institute for Fine Arts in 1984, and has subsequently exhibited in several countries including France, Belgium, China and the UAE. Her work is currently on show at the French Cultural Centre in Jebel Weibdeh until the 30th of September.

Through her art, it is easy to say that someone, somewhere is searching for the truth

Science and technology

Virtual and real worlds mesh at LAN parties

As critics tout dark visions of computers driving people apart, a new phenomenon — cyber-game parties — proves there's nothing like the human touch. P.J. Huffnaut reports:

IT IS ARAVE unlike any other. The moon hangs warm and fat in Costa Mesa, casting its midsummer light across the roof of a corporate office complex. Inside, Andrea Bruns squeezes through the sweaty chaos edging past a couple grinding on the impromptu dance floor and the rows of men playing computer games.

Flashing strobes and the glow of dozens of monitors cast psychedelic patterns of light across her pale face. Every month, Bruns grabs her computer, crams it into her tiny black convertible and heads to the BeatDown, a monthly computer-game party that has hundreds of fans vying for an invitation.

The protocol is simple: Bring cash, a personal computer and the desire to revel for up to 72 hours straight. "I can't get this off the Internet," said Bruns, 27. "I came for the games. I stayed for the people."

Welcome to the new underground, where computer games rock and twentysomethings rule.

Dubbed a local-area network, or LAN, party — because of the way organisers hook up the crowds' computers — the BeatDown is part of a growing trend changing the way people play.

That such parties even exist is an ironic commentary on today's wired culture. These games originally were designed to allow people to play over vast distances. Now, this same technology compels people to travel vast distances, eagerly hauling their equipment across the nation for face-to-face fun.

As critics tout dark visions of computers driving people apart, these hard-core gamers prove that communities — even virtual ones — need physical interaction in order to flourish.

As the slogan of the Bay Area Network Gaming Group proclaims, "A scream should be heard, not typed."

"The best game experience is not on the Net, and I think people are starting to realise that," said Cliff Blexinski, a lead game producer with Epic MegaGames.

"You can't look over at the person you just beat. You can't go out to get a beer afterward. You rarely get to actually talk to the people you're playing against. You may as well be playing against the machine."

Promoted by word of mouth and the Net, hundreds of these gigs are being held in the U.S. and Canada.

No one sleeps at these parties because, they say, sleep is for the weak. Instead, they dance, sing and play computer games for hours on end.

Yet the on-line mask stays firmly in place; no one uses their real name at a LAN party. Here, Bruns forgets her daily life as a computer programme manager and becomes "China," a gun-toting, brassy-haired bad girl.

"There is something about the games that brings out the wild child in people," said Darcie Rose Pierce, director of production for MGM Online.

"It's the anonymous element of the game play that makes people feel that they can go to the extreme. It's not them at the party. It's their online persona."

Two things count at all LAN parties — the people and how the computers are configured. A local-area network is simply a collection of computers linked together in one location.

To set up a LAN in a house, users need to install a network interface card in each computer. Cables connect the machines through these cards, which allow the PCs to communicate with each other.

The parties can then be configured in different ways, depending on their size.

Since the mid-1990s, millions of players have been flocking to the Internet in search of these games. But as the audience grew, something strange started to happen: People got tired of playing the lone warrior.

Enter the BeatDown, which marked its one-year anniversary in July. It began as an intimate gathering of friends, said founder Mark Surfas.

Word of the Costa Mesa bash spread quickly on the Net, where Web sites such as the LAN Party Ring and House of LAN offer information on the latest network

in barrooms, a growing number of computer developers are trolling through LAN parties in search of people who can play their games — and make them better.

"The gaming industry is so competitive that any feedback you can get from your core audience helps," Blexinski said. "Which would you rather use as a test group: a bunch of faceless players who only communicate by e-mail, or a bunch of living, cheering people?"

Like the extreme nature of the games they play, these young people often adopt aggressive, mysterious or hyper-masculine personas online.

Men aren't guys, they are "Hell's Caretakers" and "Overlords of the Universe." Women aren't gals, they're "Crackwhores" and "Lady Quake Marines."

Such relative anonymity is freeing because "you can look however you want (and) act however you want because no one knows who you really are or where you work," said Thomas Crenshaw, 30, who hosts LAN parties in San Diego.

Glimpses of reality eventually do peek through, said Stacy Horn, author of Cybertivity: Clicks, Culture Town. In game groups, as with most online communities, people cannot completely hide their true personality traits.

"Over time, people can't help but be themselves," Horn said. "You can role-play as much as you want. The games and the cartoonish personas can't hide the real you forever."

— Los Angeles Times



The new underground? LAN parties in the U.S. (file photo)

Physicists invent smart glass, but lack cash

By Gesine Desgroselliers

A TEAM of German scientists has come up with a way of treating window glass so that it reflects most of the hot summer sun away from a building, yet soaks in the weak sunlight of winter so as to save on heating bills. The trouble is, the physicists at Giessen University say they lack funds to turn the idea into a commercial product.

Their brainwave was to coat glass with a thin layer of vanadium dioxide. Unfortunately that makes the view through the glass rather murky, and the researchers are struggling to make it more transparent. Who needs windows if you can't admire the view?

To refine this idea and to adapt the coating to various climatic conditions we need an investor, ideally an industrial user," said Bruno Meyer, a professor at one of Giessen's physics institutes.

Modern buildings have good insulation in the walls, but still tend to leak warmth, inwards and outwards, through the windows. In colder countries,

that means expensive heating energy is wasted in winter. In summer, buildings with lots of windows — such as modern high-rises — become heat-traps. So more energy is wasted on cooling them. Reflective glass helps, but it becomes a handicap in winter-time.

Meyer's task force decided to invent "smart" glass that changed its behaviour according to the season, and hit on vanadium dioxide as the answer because of its property of letting through radiation at cold temperatures but blocking its passage when summer comes.

In the Giessen laboratory, the compound was applied to the glass as a vapour. The temperature at which it is applied is critical, because the hotter the vapour, the bigger the crystals that form and the better the switching properties of the coating.

In practice however, the vapour cannot be applied hotter than 500 degrees Celsius, which is the maximum temperature of window-glass during manufacture. Anything hotter would require

wholesale changes in glass making.

The thinnest the Giessen scientists have managed to make a coating is 100 nanometers: about one thousandth the thickness of a human hair. But that is still not thin enough to see through clearly.

Their glass is only 40 per cent as transparent as normal glass, whereas conventional tinted windows let through 70 to 80 per cent of the light that would go through untreated glass. The solution would be to make the coating even thinner and add an anti-reflex layer. Computer simulations by the team suggest an anti-reflex treatment would improve transparency by 60 per cent.

But the academics fear they are getting out of their depth. Elaborate research to create a "glass for all seasons" that people would want to buy is beyond the resources of the university department, said Meyer ruefully. If the boffins cannot find an investor, their idea will remain just that: an idea.

— Gemini News Service

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Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

Study sees a surplus of 20,000 engineers during the coming eight years

**** ACCORDING TO** a study prepared by the Jordan Engineers Association in cooperation with the Royal Scientific Society, there are at present about 3,000 unemployed engineers who represent 11 per cent of the 40,000 engineers registered at the association. Furthermore the study predicted there will be around 20,000 surplus engineers during the coming eight years and that 12,000 of those engineers will be outside the Kingdom.

The study calculated the annual surplus until the year 2005 taking 1995 as a base year and found that the highest surplus will be among architects at 226 per cent followed by electrical engineers at 211 per cent. The surplus among mechanical, civil, chemical and mining engineers was found to be 189 per cent, 178 per cent, 145 per cent and 136 per cent respectively.

The concentration of unemployment was found to be in areas that are far from the central region of Amman, Zarqa and Balqa governorates. Precisely, the concentration was in

the northern region more than in the south as the population density was higher in the north compared to the work opportunities and available projects. The study counted around 6,000 engineers in the northern region. In the southern part of the country, the population density and the number of engineers was described as "small."

"The unemployment problem among engineers started when oil prices fell and economic recession affected the Arab oil countries since the mid eighties," the study said. "The crisis exacerbated after the second Gulf war and the return of around 350,000 persons, including a large number of engineers, from the Gulf states."

The study also attributed the high number of jobless engineers to the rush of large number of high school graduates to study engineering at the beginning of the nineties when the number of factories and companies doubled in line with the Kingdom's economic development at the time (Al Ra'i).

Jordanian pharmaceutical companies urged to focus on marketing, not building plants

**** A SCIENTIFIC** and analytical study of the Jordanian pharmaceutical sector reveals that 70 per cent of Jordanian drugs are exported and that 82 per cent of the exports go to the Iraqi, Saudi and Algerian markets. The study which was prepared by the Ministry of Planning found Jordanian drugs meeting 45 per cent of the local market needs or 30 per cent of the value of drug consumption due to the high prices of imported medicines.

The study demanded the formulation of a joint strategy to develop the Jordanian pharmaceutical industry and stressed the need for cooperation in building up supporting industries.

If also recommended that negotiations with foreign companies be conducted for the early adoption of an international patent law against specific concessions.

"The Jordanian companies should focus on marketing more than on building new plants in order to enter the large U.S. market," the study said noting that most Jordanian pharmaceutical firms focus on the same types of products which are mostly imitated. "The companies conduct research in only two areas: production methods and means for continuity and studies on biological balance," the study concluded (Al Aswaj).

Jordanian and Palestinian businessmen propose setting up commercial services company

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordanian and Palestinian businessmen Tuesday discussed a proposal for setting up a joint commercial services company to be entrusted with increasing commercial cooperation between Jordan and the Palestinian National Authority (PNA).

The two sides agreed to prepare a joint memorandum to be presented to the parties concerned in both countries detailing their suggestions for increasing exports to both the Jordanian and Palestinian markets.

The meeting was held on the sidelines of the meetings of the Jordanian-Palestinian Businessmen Council, which reviewed trade and investment relations.

The council noted that economic relations fall short of the aspirations of the two countries and attributed the low trading and investment activity to the obstacles placed by Israel in order to monopolise and increase exports to the Palestinian market which imports \$2.2 billion worth of Israeli products a year.

The two sides discussed possibilities of exporting

iron, oil products, detergents and vegetable oil to Palestine.

The two sides also discussed means of increasing joint investments in both countries in order to achieve economic integration between both parties.

The Jordanian side was headed by Jordanian Businessmen Association President Hamdi Tabba' while it was headed on the Palestinian side by Hamdi Masrouji, president of the Palestinian Businessmen Association.

AFM trading falls by 28% in August

By Tareq Ayyoub

AMMAN — Turnover at the Amman Financial Market (AFM) fell by 28.1 per cent during August compared to the previous month, a stock market report showed Monday.

According to the report, turnover last month amounted to JD36.9 million compared to JD51.3 million during July but the number of shares traded totalled 18.8 million, an 11.2 per cent increase over the total recorded during July.

The average daily turnover registered during the 22 days of trading in August amounted to JD1.7 million compared to JD2.6 million during 20 days of

trading in the previous month.

The report indicated that the banking sector received the bulk of the monthly trading by totalling JD25.6 million, or 69.4 per cent, followed by the industrial sector with JD8.6 million, or 23.3 per cent of the overall trading.

The services sector recorded JD2 million, 5.4 per cent and finally the insurance sector took JD700,000, or 1.9 per cent.

Trading of stocks in August covered 54,700 stocks carrying a total value of JD551,500, compared to 14,300 stocks in July worth JD145,200, the report said.

The AFM's price index closed 0.69 point, or 0.38 per cent, less than the previous month.

The report pointed out that the price index of the banking sector increased by 3.76 points, or 1.29 per cent, while the industrial, services and insurance sectors slipped by 4.27, 1.23 and 1.62 points respectively.

Many brokers believe that the decline in the turnover and price index was due to the half-year "weak" results by most of the companies in the market, especially in the industrial sector.

They said that among the firms that were below the expectations were the Arab Potash and Phosphate Mining companies, the major hard currency earners for the Kingdom.

Many believe that the drop in their half-year results was due to the decline in their exports due to the low demand in the world markets and the loss of some markets, especially in eastern Europe.

Among the big winners were the Arab Bank and the Housing Bank and some pharmaceutical firms.

El Al stresses marketing over cost cuts

TEL AVIV (R) — Faced with slumping tourist arrivals in its home market, El Al Israel Airlines is fighting back with stepped-up marketing efforts rather than cost-cutting measures.

President Yoel Feldschuh said Tuesday, "Our method isn't to make efficiency measures. Our method is to create demand and overhaul the marketing system, so that on the revenues side we are getting more."

"On the expenses side we are working via a multi-year plan. We don't need to take dramatic measures on this side."

A career air force officer, Feldschuh joined state-owned El Al as president in October 1996, only months after a spate of suicide bombings by militants caused foreign tourist arrivals to Israel to plummet.

The industry has yet to recover. Arrivals to Israel in the first seven months of the year were down 7.0 per cent from the same period of 1997.

Feldschuh said the thrust of El Al's new strategy is to abandon its traditional focus on the

peak flying seasons — the summer, Passover/Easter and the Jewish High Holidays in September-October — and cater instead to year-round travellers.

"Our customer base of frequent fliers is getting much more attention in our business vision. Business fliers also are. These groups fly throughout the year," he said.

"Israelis love to fly. The economic situation has improved, there's no more travel tax and air fares are cheap. We finally understand this, perhaps a little late in the game," he added.

To better serve frequent fliers, the airline is reconfiguring its fleet. It is cutting the number of jumbo jets, which it used to pack with passengers during peak seasons on its main routes, and replacing them with medium-sized jets.

By the end of 1999, El Al's fleet will have grown to 30 jets from the current 28, enabling it to offer more departure times on its routes.

El Al is also offering custom-made flights like one-day trips to London, improving cabin

service and adding more legroom on its jets.

"The company was very production-oriented, to getting the planes up in time. It was less directed towards marketing, less customer-oriented. This in essence is the big change we're making," Feldschuh said.

He said management had to go slow on efficiencies because of El Al's special circumstances.

As the country's only regularly scheduled international airline, staff turnover is low because there are no competitors from whom to lose or attract staff. The airline is also saddled with a government-imposed ban on flights during the Jewish Sabbath (Saturday) and holidays.

Because it is an obvious target for militants, El Al also employs tough and costly security measures on its flights.

The company reported a loss of \$4.2 million last year, a big improvement over the \$83.1 million loss in 1996.

But Feldschuh said he did

not see profits this year. He noted that consultants estimated three to four years ago that the Sabbath-flight ban alone costs the carrier some \$50 million a year in lost profit.

Despite service improvements and a 2.7 per cent rise in revenues per kilometre flown last year, the number of passengers El Al carries has not grown significantly.

"Over the last year we've succeeded in stopping the erosion of our market share, and in a few places we've even gotten some back, even though we are not doing battle over market share but 'wallet share'."

Feldschuh said El Al's impending privatisation next year would yield the airline benefits, although the government plans to float only a minority 49 per cent of equity to ensure the continued ban on Sabbath flights.

Feldschuh said privatisation would settle long-running problems over the airline's pension fund and introduce the management to the discipline of the financial markets.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 1998

By C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) You're like a fine-tuned machine, capable of amazing speed — with the right fuel. This person may not be much to look at, but he or she is persistent and persistent, with an awesome memory. **Learn to learn up with someone like this today and you'll not only get a lot done, but increase your revenue considerably.**

Taurus (April 20 to May 20) You can do no wrong today. Everything you touch turns to gold. Everything you say comes true. Your friends even point you in the right direction. Why fight it? This success isn't financial, it's love, love, love, and tonnes of love, and you're heading right into it. Enjoy!

Gemini (May 21 to June 21) This is another good day for practical decisions, with one in particular ripe to be made. You may have been hesitant till now, unsure what would work out best for all concerned. But today it should be getting more obvious. If you still need help, consult a person with more experience in these matters.

Cancer (June 22 to July 21) Get together with friends, plan your course of action and start down the path. This will be more fun than work. You'll be doing something you enjoy, with people you like to be around. Make that your objective, anyway. If you can also be doing something that benefits others, great! You will have made a grand slam.

Leo (July 22 to August 21) Somebody in authority is watching, and thinking of giving you more responsibility. That's OK with you. The more control you have, the more likely things will go your way. But first, you need to show you can produce the results this other person's after. That's how you'll get from here to there.

Virgo (August 22 to September 22) You've been introspective for the last month or so, cleaning up old messes and solving old problems. Now you get to decide what to do next. Today, take a good step in the right direction by making a decision. Don't choose what you ought to do. Choose what you want to do, out of service to your high ideals.

Libra (September 23 to October 22) You need to pay attention to old bills, old obligations and old friends. If you've got a long-term investment plan, add to it now. The money you put into your retirement account will provide security in the future. The time you spend with old friends counts the same way. Don't worry. You'll get the bills paid, you'll have to steer.

Scorpio (October 23 to November 21) The moon is in Taurus, which calms things down again. It can also indicate you'll run into opposition, in the form of somebody else's rules and regulations. You don't like that, but today you'd be wise to comply. You might actually achieve what you want more quickly if you do, so don't grump too much.

Sagittarius (November 22 to December 21) The path toward career success continues, off and on, through the day. If you can get Friday the 13th off, do that. You'll have a break by then. Now, back to today. That push cannot be denied, but you won't reach your goal by coasting. There's work involved, too. To wind up in the right place, you have to steer.

Capricorn (December 22 to January 20) This is a great day for romance, especially if it's with a person you've known for years. It's debatable whether new love is better than old love, but when you fall in love again with somebody you already love, you've got the best of both worlds. Just relax and let it happen.

Aquarius (January 21 to February 19) There's been a flurry of activity lately, and more to come. Today, find time for yourself. Stay home tonight if possible. If you must, have a meeting with friends, invite them over to your place. It's important for you to build up your energy. You've been going down a little this time.

Pisces (February 20 to March 20) Pisces is the sign of creative genius. It's a little difficult for you to develop your natural talents, however. You're interested in so many things it's hard to settle on one. You need to set up some sort of structure in order to achieve your goal. If you're not sure how, learn from a person who's already done it.

Birthstones of September: Sapphire — Lapis Lazuli

Khreisha, Zeid discuss agricultural cooperation

AMMAN (Petra) — Agriculture Minister Mijhem Khreisha and his Palestinian counterpart, Hikmat Zeid, Tuesday discussed details of an agricultural quota between Jordan and Palestine in preparation for developing a comprehensive agricultural agreement designed to serve the interest of Jordanian and Palestinian farmers.

The two sides agreed to hold a tripartite meeting to be attended by agricultural experts from Jordan, Palestine and Israel to formulate a clear mechanism for implementing agricultural agreements concluded among the three countries and to facilitate exchange of agricultural products between Jordan and Palestine.

They also discussed issues relating to certificates of origin and stressed the need for a mechanism to ensure that all goods exported from Palestine to Jordan or through Jordan to Arab countries carry a Palestinian certificate of origin to avoid the leakage of any other products to the markets in the neighbouring countries.

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U.S. OPEN

Andre Agassi fights back upset bid before match halted by rain

NEW YORK (AP) — Andre Agassi woke up just in time.

The eighth-seeded Agassi was just two points away from being ousted from the U.S. Open on Monday night when

7), 0-3 when play was postponed until today because a steady rain washed across the National Tennis Center.

In the early afternoon, play was delayed for 2 1/4 hours

matches at the year's final Grand Slam tournament. Defending champion Patrick Rafter led No. 14 Goran Ivanisevic 6-3, 3-2, and No. 12 Jonas Bjorkman led Jan

women's fourth-round matches. No. 2 Lindsay Davenport downed No. 10 Nathalie Tauziat 6-1, 6-4; No. 4 Arantxa Sanchez Vicario defeated No. 13 Anna Kournikova 7-6 (7-5), 6-3; No. 5 Venus Williams stopped No. 12 Mary Pierce 6-1, 7-6 (7-4) and No. 13 Amanda Coetzer upset No. 7 Conchita Martinez 6-4, 4-6, 6-2.

The women's quarterfinals pair Davenport against Coetzer and Williams against Sanchez Vicario in the bottom half of the draw.

The top half, scheduled for today, has No. 1 Martina Hingis, the defending champion, vs. No. 6 Monica Seles, and No. 3 Jana Novotna against No. 11 Patty Schnyder.

Agassi was outgunned at every turn and appeared disinterested as Kucera powered his way to the first two sets and a service break in the third. He was more worried about Kucera's repeated tossing of the ball on serves.

"How many times is he allowed to do that?" Agassi demanded of umpire Norm Chryst. "So I can do it on every serve, right?" he asked.

The irritation seemed to awaken the listless Agassi, who broke Kucera's serve in the seventh game. When he fought off a break point to hold in the eighth game, the third set was level at 4-4.

Kucera, known as Little Cat because his coach, Miloslav Mecir, was called The Cat, was three points away from victory two games later when he led 5-4. But Agassi went to the moonballs — a soft, high arcing shot that was used ad nauseum in a women's fourth-round match earlier in the day — to change pace and befuddle the Slovakian right-hander.

It worked. Agassi dropped only one point on his next two serves to send the set to a tiebreak, where he won the first four points.

Kucera responded by winning five straight points for a 5-4 lead, two points from victory.

A forehand that skidded on the baseline, a shot that Kucera thought was long, pulled Agassi even. Two points later, 2 hours, 13 minutes into the match, Agassi reached his first set point. He didn't need another.

By now in high gear, Agassi ripped through the first three games of the fourth set, breaking Kucera at 40 in the second game before the rain halted play.

Sampras had 18 aces and never lost his serve in his victory over the 18-year-old Safin. It was the 600th match win of his career.

"I was cracking it pretty hard throughout the match," Sampras said. "I got the serve going, which has been a little bit up and down throughout this past week. Today it seemed like it clicked."

After winning the final six points of the tiebreaker in her win over Pierce, Williams celebrating by shimmying to the net.

"I really shouldn't have done the dance, I should have waited until later," she said. "I didn't plan to do the dance."

I planned to win the second set really easy."

At 5-5 in the second set, the two delighted the crowd with a game that lasted 13 minutes, 57 seconds, and ended when Williams converted her seventh break point. Pierce broke right back and took a 4-1 lead in the tiebreaker, but didn't get another point in the match.

In the only singles match completed before the afternoon rain, Coetzer and Martinez traded moonballs and baseline rallies for 2 hours, 39 minutes. One game had 28 points, including 11 deuces, and consumed more than 20 minutes.

Low-key Lindsay in Open quarterfinals

NEW YORK (AP) — For someone ranked third in the world and seeded second in the U.S. Open, Lindsay Davenport is keeping a low profile.

No beads bouncing all over the place. No headbands holding her hair. Just low-key Lindsay, winning her way into the quarterfinals, where she'll meet Amanda Coetzer.

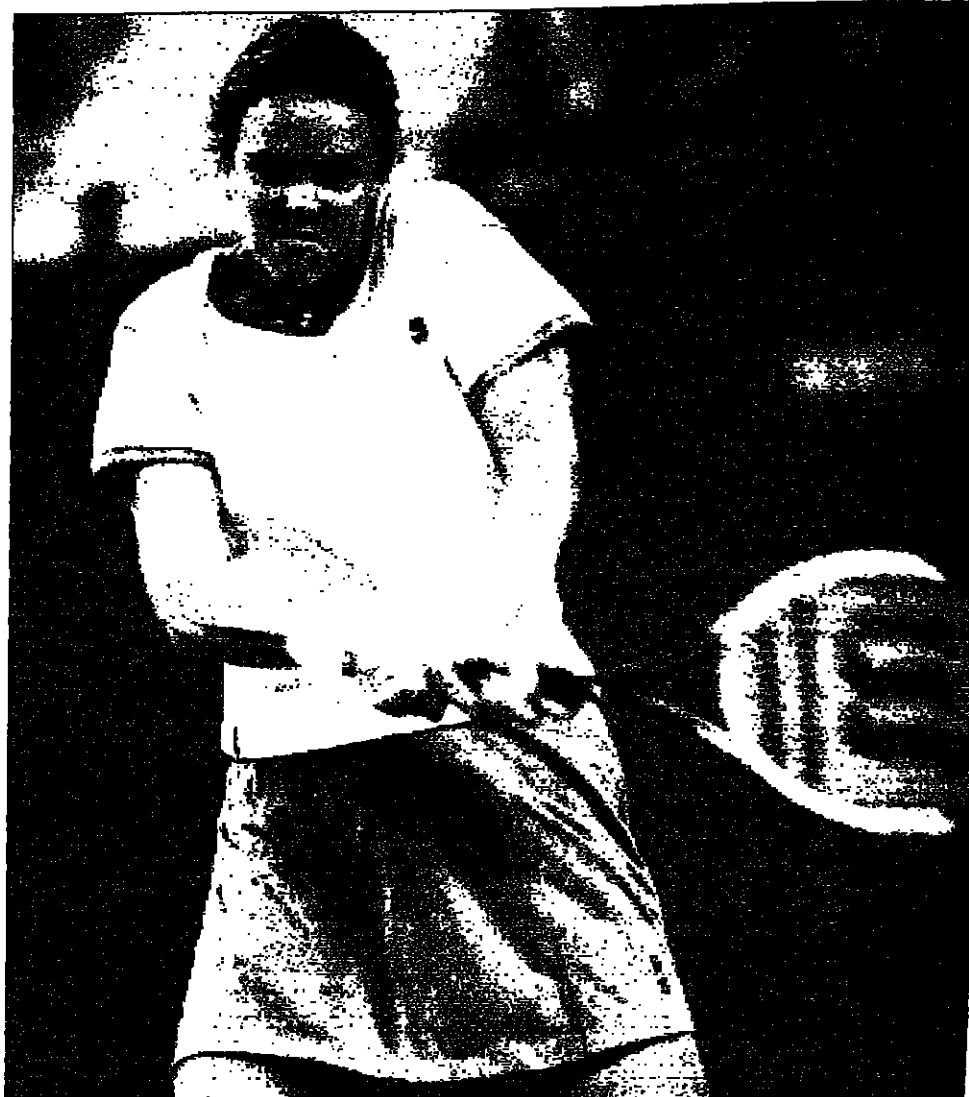
"I like being the quiet underdog, knowing I can go about my business," Davenport said after defeating Nathalie Tauziat 6-1, 6-4 on Monday. "I'm always still in the second week these days." The underdog image fits because despite her fancy ranking and seeding, Davenport has never won a Grand Slam event. Her best performance on tennis' main stage were three straight semifinals — at last year's Open and the Australian and French this season.

She seemed to take a step back when she lost in the quarterfinals at Wimbledon, beaten by Tauziat. That made Monday night's victory over the French player that much sweeter.

"I guess so," Davenport said. "I wasn't happy when I lost to her at Wimbledon." She also wasn't surprised. It was her second loss in 10 matches against Tauziat, both times on the grass of the All England Club. Hardcourts like the ones at Flushing Meadows are more suited to Davenport's game.

"She is definitely more comfortable on the grass than I am," Davenport said. "I love playing on the hardcourts. I'm definitely more comfortable on them. You get a higher bounce when helps me. I don't have to bend as much as on the grass. I can get her serve back a little easier on the hardcourt." "Still, Davenport played cautiously.

"I felt like I'm playing well," she said. "I didn't want to be in



Number two seeded Lindsay Davenport of the U.S. returns a shot to number ten seeded Nathalie Tauziat of France Monday at the U.S. Open. Davenport won 6-1, 6-4 (AFP photo)

any danger out there." And there were moments when she might have been. Tauziat, who went on to the finals after beating Davenport at Wimbledon, was down 3-1 in the second set and drew even.

"When she starts serving well, you have to really concentrate to hold your serve,"

Davenport said. "A couple of times I think I was down a lot of break points and only got broken once, which is great." Davenport arrived at the Open as the hottest player on the tour. She swept three consecutive hardcourt tournaments in California and had a 14-match winning streak before losing to

Steffi Graf in the semifinals of the Open warmup at New Haven.

"I'm playing well, concentrating very well," Davenport said. "I'm taking advantage of the opportunities that were given to me." She is in the best shape of her life and equipped with a new mindset.



Number eight seeded Andre Agassi of the U.S. hits a forehand to ninth seeded Karol Kucera of Slovakia Monday at the U.S. Open in Flushing Meadows, New York (AFP photo)



Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario of Spain celebrates in the closing game of her fourth round win over Anna Kournikova of Russia during U.S. Open play at the USTA National Tennis Center September 7. Sanchez-Vicario won 7-6 6-3 (Reuters photo)

he reverted to the moonballs of his youth and the power game of his winning years. That was enough to send his match against No. 9 Karol Kucera to a fourth set.

Then the rains came. Again. Kucera led 6-3, 6-3, 6-7 (5-

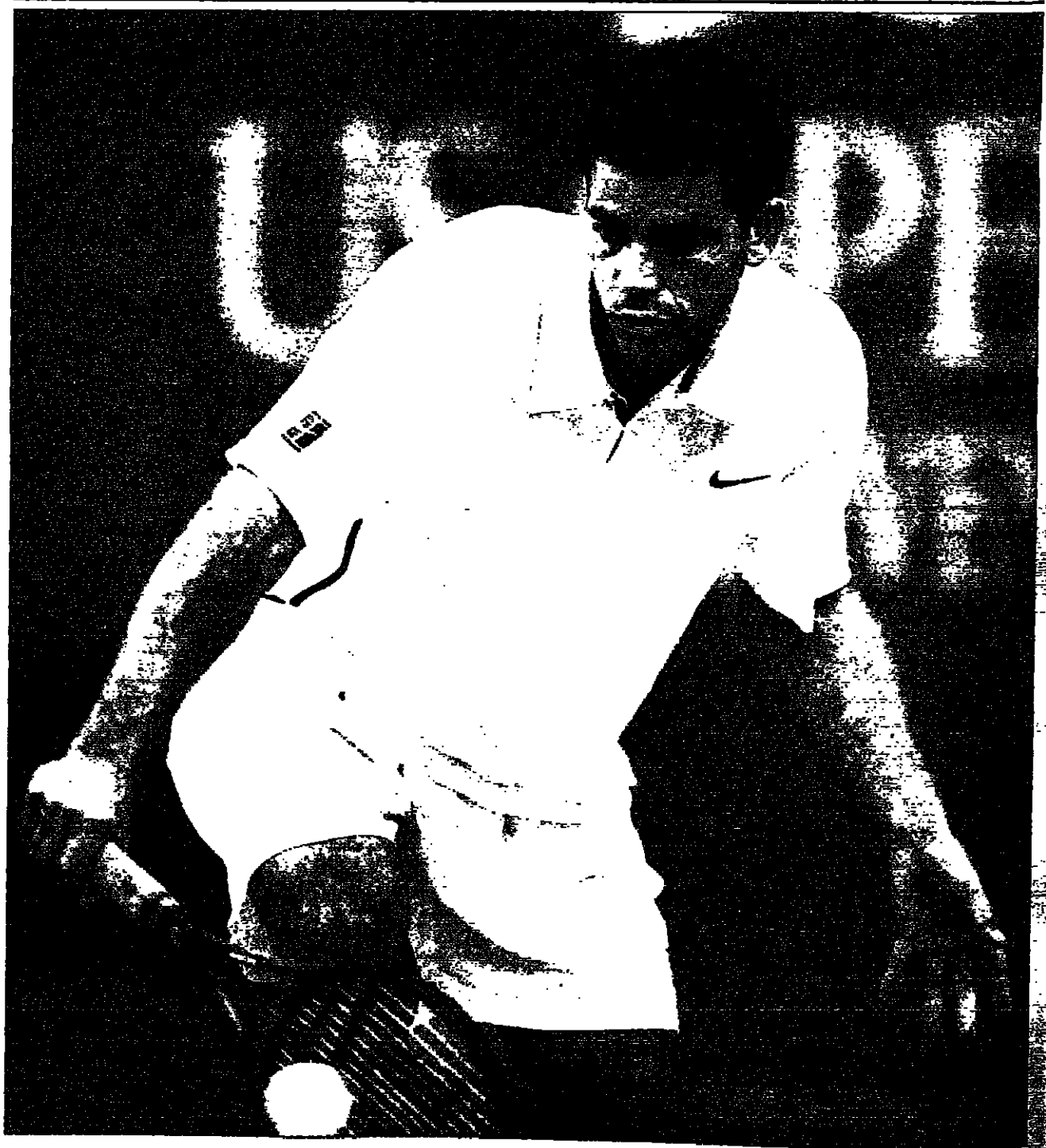
when a severe thunderstorm lashed the area, turning the sky midnight black. Tornadoes were spotted in the New York area, although no damage was reported at Flushing Meadows.

The second stoppage affected two other men's fourth-round

Siemerink 6-4, 1-4 when play was stopped.

All three matches were scheduled for today.

Earlier, top-seeded Pete Sampras gained a quarterfinal berth by defeating Marat Safin of Russia 6-4, 6-3, 6-2. In

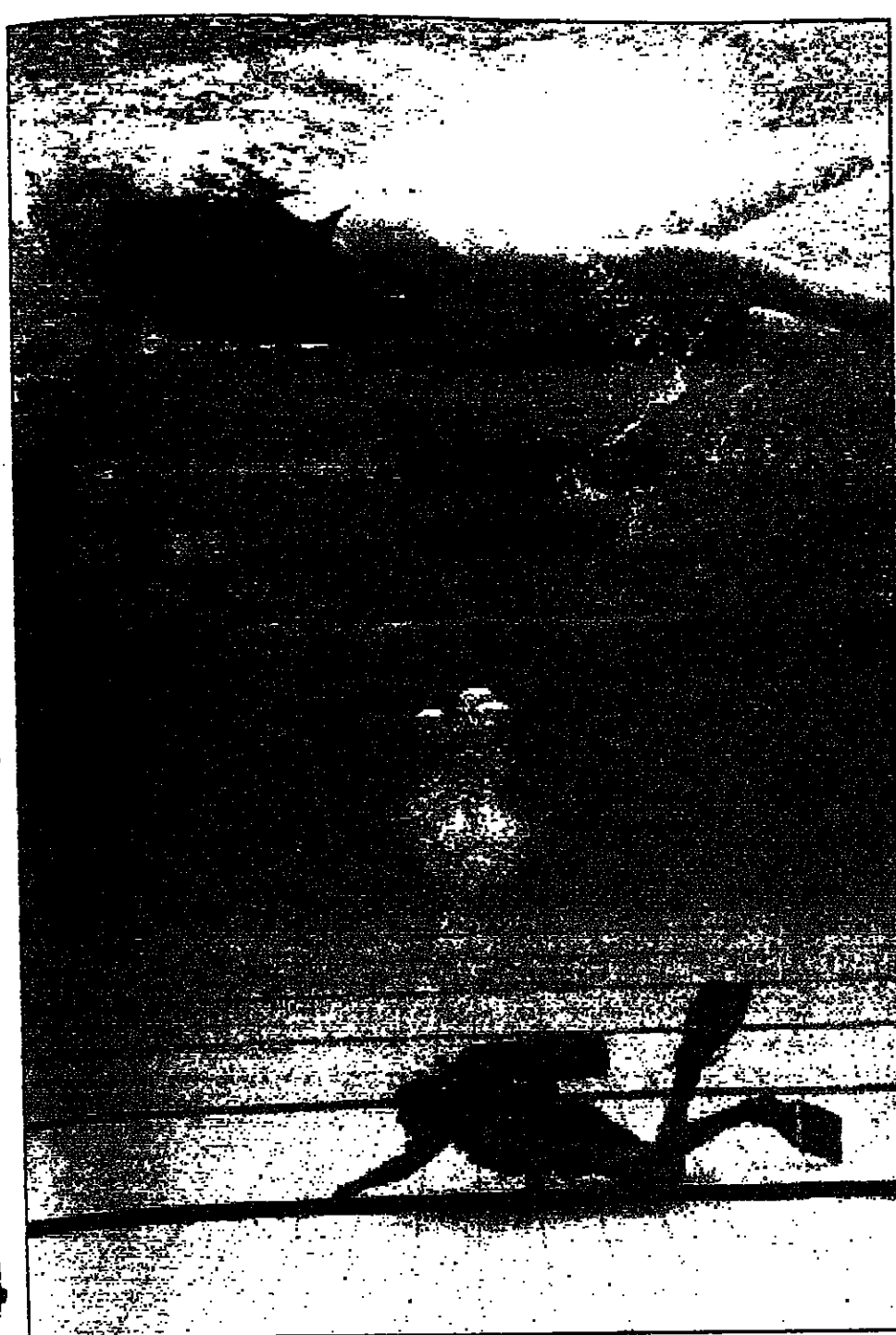


Pete Sampras

TODAY AT	PHILADELPHIA '1'	PHILADELPHIA '2'	PLAZA	CONCORD	GALLERIA 1	GALLERIA 2	Hidden Yarns Theatre
	Robert Duvall & Tea Leoni...in DEEP IMPACT Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Leonardo Di Caprio...in THE MAN IN THE IRON MASK Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Comedian Adel Imam...in AL ZA'EEM Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30 Additional shows Thursday and Friday evenings at 12:30	CONCORD -1- DR. JEKLY MS. HYDE Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15 CONTACT Shows: 8:15, 10:30 CONCORD -2- UP CLOSE & PERSONAL Shows: 3:30, 9:30 only	ABDOUN www.cns.com.jo/Galleria GODZILLA Shows: 3:30, 6:15, 8:30	ABDOUN www.cns.com.jo/Galleria CITY OF ANGELS Shows: 3:30, 6:30, 8:30 Adel Imam...in AL ZA'EEM at 10:30 p.m.	WATCH OUT FOR THE NEW PLAY

Wire of the St. Louis
Monday at Busch Sta
of 61 for the season

by rain
terfinals



An Australian television technician checks his equipment while competitors practice for the XVI Commonwealth Games Tuesday at the aquatic centre at Bukit Jalil National Sports Complex in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The games are set to begin 11 September (AFP photo)

Del Piero ready to sign new deal

MILAN (AFP) — Italian champions Juventus are negotiating a new three-year contract with Alessandro Del Piero that will earn their star striker around \$15 million.

Del Piero's existing five-year contract expires in 2000, after earning him a total of 10 billion lira (\$6 million).

However, Del Piero's value on the international market place has rocketed in recent years and his agents are anxious to make sure the 23-year-old does not get shortchanged by the Turin club.

They are seeking 25 billion to 30 billion lira for the 2000-2003 deal, as before, net of taxes.

The club may be flinching at the asking price, but director general Luciano Moggi said: "We want him to stay, and a solution will be found... not long after October 5 at the latest."

Del Piero confirmed that a deal to keep him away from likely predators from the English Premiership or the Spanish Liga was imminent.

"There's a willingness on both sides to stay together, it's just a question of finding the time to talk about it," he said.

Final whistle for Kohl's football hero

BONN (R) — Chancellor Helmut Kohl can add a new name to the long list of unemployed he received on Tuesday — Germany's soccer coach Berti Vogts.

Vogts's shock resignation as national trainer knocked the election off the top news spot and forced Kohl's campaign team into defensive formation.

"Do what Berti did," read protesters' placards at Kohl's first election rally late on Monday after the news broke.

Kohl was Vogts's biggest fan. He basked in the glory of Germany's soccer successes and loved being photographed with the team. Vogts returned the favour, saying Kohl usually brought the team good luck when he was in the stands cheering.

But this year, just as Kohl entered the field for the September 27 election, the terraces turned against the chancellor's hero.

The final whistle came after Germany's plodding performance at the World Cup in July.

Dark passions were roused in this football-mad nation and the media bayed for blood.

Vogts quit.

The opposition Social Democrats and Greens, sensing Kohl was wrong-footed, made their run on Tuesday when figures

showing unemployment still above four million were published.

Both parties relished telling Kohl he should follow his friend to the changing room.

"Team mates should stick together," said Greens spokesman Juergen Trittin. "When the team is not playing well and you have lost the fans' support, it's time to go," he suggested.

Kohl's spokesman Otto Hauser tried to sideline the Vogts affair, saying the chancellor would stay the course.

"Some in the SPD," said Hauser, changing sporting metaphors, "are in the home straight and believe they are going to win. But the final stretch is still to come. It's like a cross-country race." Kohl, who once played for his local side, is still up to five points behind another former soccer player, his SPD challenger Gerhard Schroeder.

In a last-minute tactical switch to close the gap, Kohl's Christian Democrats have started stressing the chancellor's record as a world player over the past 16 years.

"World Class for Germany," read Kohl's campaign posters.

"Vogts was world-class," said the SPD's campaign manager Franz Muentzerfering. "But he



Picture dated 19 June 1998 of German soccer coach Berti Vogts, during a press conference in Nice, southern France. Vogts, 51, has resigned, announced the German Football Federation (DFB) Monday (AFP photo)

drew the right conclusions at the right time." The Kohl-Vogts comparison was too tempting for the press to ignore too.

Commentators trawled through clippings for quotes showing how closely the pair identified with one another.

St. Louis goes crazy as McGwire hits 61st

ST. LOUIS (AP) — Horns blared, shoppers stopped and cheered, and St. Louis generally went berserk when Mark McGwire hit his 61st home run.

And it was even more nuts inside Busch Stadium, where McGwire lined a 1-1 pitch from the Chicago Cubs' Mike Morgan deep into the left-field seats in the first inning, tying Roger Maris' 37-year-old record for most homers in a season.

Even Chicago's Sammy Sosa, who with 58 homers is chasing both Maris and McGwire, applauded into his glove in right field.

The roar from the 50,530 fans, including Maris' sons, lasted for several minutes, well into the at-bat of teammate Ray Lankford. But it masked emotions that ran even deeper in this baseball-crazy town.

Many were moved to tears after watching McGwire

circle the bases, slap hands with Cubs' first baseman Mark Grace and third baseman Gary Gaetti, a former Cardinals teammate, before greeting his 10-year-old son Matthew at home plate with a bear hug.

"To be here, I will remember and cherish my entire life," said Rick Faccin, 44, of Alton, Illinois. "The reception he received and what he did as he rounded the bases gave me chills all

over."

"When I saw the ball hit off the glass and I knew he tied the record, I had a few tears in my eyes," said Don Fisher, 51, of Marion, Illinois. "It made me feel like I was part of history since I saw it live."

During a curtain call, McGwire thumped his chest and pointed skyward as he looked to the Maris family, sitting behind photographers along the first-base line, and other family and friends.

"He acknowledged us. He tapped his heart, like dad was in his heart," Kevin Maris said.

McGwire said he also looked for his parents and mouthed the words, "Happy Birthday" to his father, who was celebrating his 61st birthday.



Mark McGwire of the St. Louis Cardinals releases the bat as he watches his 61st homerun Monday at Busch Stadium, in St. Louis, MO. McGwire tied the home-run record of 61 for the season set by Roger Maris in 1961 (AFP photo)

Juventus worth more than Man. United

MILAN (AFP) — Manchester United may have a staggering offer of 575 million pounds, but Juventus is worth even more than the Premiership club according to Italian businessmen.

Reports of the proposed takeover at Old Trafford by Rupert Murdoch's BSkyB television company have shocked the money-men here, who believe it must be part of a wider plan to create a Super League.

Claudio Pasqualin, head of the national soccer agents association, said: "It's a sensational offer, and clearly excessive."

"The Stock Exchange value of Manchester United is far lower than the 1,700 billion lira offer and you can't justify that figure with even the most optimistic prediction for merchandising sales."

Trying to explain the move, Pasqualin said: "Murdoch's criteria are clearly different. They must fit in with a larger project, perhaps one that includes the Super League."

"Certainly, though, he's not being guided by his emotions. Considering his track record, it must be something concrete."

However, Pasqualin had no doubts about the value of the jewel in the crown of Italian football.

"Juventus? 2,000 billion lira," Pasqualin told daily Tuttosport on Tuesday.

"By the usual method of assessing a company's value, it would be less. But since Murdoch is not taking contracts, merchandising, TV rights and ticket sales into account, Juventus is clearly worth more."

"It's a more important club than Manchester United, it's got more tradition and more prestige," he said of the team who have won three of the last four Italian league titles and reached the last three European Cup finals.

Sergio Bertin, manager of Lazio's 50 billion lira signing Christian Vieri, was more pragmatic, and pointed out the differences in fashion sense among Britons and

Italians. "The merchandising sales in Britain are influenced by fashion," he said. "But young people here take more care about the way they dress. So they are less likely to buy certain articles of clothing."

But Bertin, like Pasqualin, also saw United fitting into a wider plan for European football, and one that includes the breakaway Super League.

"The figures are simply out of this world," he said, "and can't be explained by the ownership alone of the club. There is a bigger project, and football is only the means to the end."

"Perhaps it is a Trojan horse, to enable (Murdoch) to buy the rights for the Super League." Juventus director general Luciano Moggi said: "The offer seems an exaggerated one, but the surprise has to be offset by the reputation of the man behind it. Murdoch knows how to do business, and he looks a long way ahead."

JORDAN TIMES E-MAIL:
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The British Council EXAMINATIONS GCE/IGCSE

The British Council would like to announce that entries for Edexcel Foundation (London Exams) GCE January 1999 session and the University of Cambridge IGCSE/GCE November 1998 session will be accepted from Sunday 13 - Tuesday 15 September.

We encourage candidates to register during this period to avoid payment of the late entry fee.

Registration time: 09:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Candidates are required to bring with them a recent photo, an official identification and a copy of their passport.

Please ask for Miss Diana Muasher

Registered in England as a charity No. 209131

unicef

The United Nations Children's Fund Country Office in Jordan seeks qualified candidates for the following position:

APO Information/Communication Officer-NOB
Duty Station: Amman, Jordan

Purpose of the Post:

Under the guidance of the Representative, responsible for the development, planning, implementation and monitoring of the information and communication activities, to support the country programmes in Jordan and the programme for Palestinians in Jordan.

Major Duties and Responsibilities:

Specifically the incumbent of this post would:

- Organise the production, distribution and follow-up of information and training material to targeted audiences to promote children's and women's rights and capacity building in the programmes.
- Develop a strategy and plan for the production, dissemination, monitoring and evaluation of information materials to implement and mobilise support for the programmes of cooperation in Jordan.
- Disseminate advocacy materials from HQ, Geneva and Regional Office, research findings to government officials and programme staff, and ensure exchange of experience and information with them.
- Provide technical support to government counterparts in the development and appropriate use of communication for social development.
- Organise special events and activities and generate public support for them in close collaboration with the Representative's office and MENARO. Evaluate activities on the basis of communication efficiency.

Minimum Qualifications:

- University degree in Social Science, Communication, Journalism or related fields.
- Minimum of 7 years progressive experience in information/communication related to social development in an international context.
- Excellent command of English and Arabic languages both spoken and written required. Other U.N. languages an asset.

Other skills:

- Excellent computer skills including desktop publishing.
- Proven ability to formulate, plan and execute ideas on development as well as transfer of knowledge and skills.
- Ability to express clearly and concisely ideas and concepts in written, oral and audiovisual form. Excellent communication skills.
- Ability to organise training.

CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS SEPTEMBER 30, 1998

Please send detailed resume in English quoting reference 03/98 to:

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